

Partnership for Education?

A Case Study on Tumaco, Colombia on a North-South Co-operation for Education in Conflict Areas

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Master's Thesis in Latin American Studies
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UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

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Abstract

This thesis contributes to the subject of north-south partnerships between non-governmental development organisations (NGOs) working with education in areas affected by armed conflict and humanitarian challenges. The increased numbers of NGOs and other international organisations such as the UN working with development is used as a demand for better co-ordination of development projects, both to avoid project overlapping, but also to increase the impacts of the projects. The case study focuses on an ongoing partnership in Tumaco, located on the Pacific coast in South-Western Colombia, which is experiencing high levels of armed conflict, leading to high numbers of forced displacements. The studied partnership consists of two northern development NGOs, as well as two local NGOs and a Community-Based Organisation (CBO), but also includes co-operation with Colombian education authorities, local Education Institutions and universities. This demonstrates a complex dynamic between the partners, and poses challenges to issues such as balance in the co-operation in terms of decision-making and project management.

The partnership's aim is to enrol internal displaced persons and marginalised population into the public school system with the use of flexible education models and institution strengthening of the education institutions. The study's central subject is to explore to which degree the partnership is complying with its prerequisites. Based on the case study, the paper concludes that the partnership is a necessary mechanism to increase the desired outcomes of the projects. The partners have different levels of participation in the co-operation. The study shows that the studied northern NGOs have a well-established relationship with the local community organisations, while the relations with the education authorities is a more formal, and is perceived as giving public legitimacy to the project. The study contributes to a discussion on how development actors co-operate on different levels to assist internal displaced and vulnerable persons in areas with high levels of security challenges with education.

Resumen

Esta tesis es una contribución al tema sobre la colaboración entre organizaciones no-gubernamentales (ONG) del Sur y el Norte enfocadas en desarrollo, que trabajan con educación en áreas afectadas por conflicto armado y desafíos humanitarios. La incrementada cifra de ONG y otras organizaciones internacionales como la ONU que trabajan en desarrollo ha sido usada como una demanda para mejorar la coordinación de proyectos de desarrollo. Esta demanda está basada en una teoría de que es necesario evitar que los proyectos se traslapen, y también para aumentar el impacto de los proyectos. El estudio de caso trata una alianza que origina en Tumaco, situada en la costa pacífica colombiana, que experimenta altos niveles de conflicto armado, algo que conlleva a frecuentes desplazamientos forzados internos de personas. La estudiada asociación consiste de dos ONG del norte, dos ONG colombianas y una corporación de grupos comunitarios. Además la asociación incluye a autoridades de educación, instituciones educativas y universidades. El estudio da prueba de una dinámica compleja entre los socios, y plantea desafíos relacionados a temas como equilibrio en la toma de decisiones y gestión del proyecto educativo.

El enfoque de la asociación es incluir niños, niñas, jóvenes y adolescentes desescolarizados al sistema educativo, además de trabajar con la calidad de la educación existente. Esto se hace a través del uso de modelos de educación flexible y el fortalecimiento de las instituciones educativas. El tema central del estudio es explorar hasta qué niveles la asociación cumple con sus prerrequisitos. La conclusión del estudio de caso demuestra que la asociación es un mecanismo necesario para aumentar los resultados deseados del proyecto. Los socios tienen diferentes niveles de participación en la alianza. El estudio demuestra que las ONG del norte tienen una relación bien establecida con las organizaciones de la comunidad, mientras las relaciones con las autoridades educativas tienen un carácter más formal. Basado en lo anterior es percibido que esta relación tiene fines de dar legitimación estatal al proyecto. El estudio contribuye a una discusión sobre cómo actores de desarrollo coopera con educación a diferentes niveles para asistir desplazados internos y personas vulnerables en áreas afectadas por altos niveles de problemas con la seguridad.

Preface

Lo primero que un niño traumatizado tiene que hacer es sentirse alegre, recuperar la alegría.

Translated into English, the above states that “the first thing a traumatised child should do is to recover happiness.” This is one of several statements presented to me during field work. This serves as an example of the challenges internal displaced children in Colombia are facing, meaning that children affected by the armed conflict not always are capable of following a regular school class. Instead, they need special attention and sometimes follow flexible education models as a way of returning to school. This paper is dedicated to all the persons working to assure access to education as well as education quality in Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities in the Pacific Colombian coast; an area heavily affected by armed conflict and marginalised conditions. Some of these people gave their lives while working to improve living conditions for their children, families, friends and neighbours.

Keep up the good work RECOMPAS.

It has been a long road to get to this point of turning in the paper. I am very thankful for the support from my supervisor at the University of Oslo, Jemima Garcia-Godos, for guiding me on the way. Your professional backing and knowledge on Colombia has been indispensable for this work. I would also like to thank my supervisor in Colombia, Edgar Ramirez Monsalve from the National University of Colombia in Medellin, for initial guidance back in 2013. You introduced me to central aspects of human development and citizenship in Colombia, in which the role of education is central. My wife Adriana also deserves my sincere gratitude. In addition of giving me emotional support, you have spent hours and hours helping me with the transcriptions of the interviews. I think that there are few wives who bring their husband food while he is working at the university. I would also like to thank my brother Christian for helpful corrections of the language. Also my family has shown me emotional support – thank you! The remaining errors are solely my responsible.

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List of Abbreviations

CBO – Community-Based Organisation

CIA – The Central Intelligence Agency (US)

CSO – Civil Society Organisation

DAC - The Development Assistance Committee

DANE - Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics

ECHO - The European Commission's Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection department

EE – Ethno-education – *etno educación*

EFA – Education For All

EHS – Ethno High School – *Etno Bachillerato*

EI – Educational Institution

ES – Education Secretariat

FEM – Flexible Education Model

HDI – Human Development Index

HFP – High School for Peace – *Bachillerato Pacicultor*

IASC – Inter-Agency Standing Committee

IDB – The Inter-American Development Bank

IDP – Internal Displaced Person

INEE – Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies

INGDO – International Non-Governmental Development Organisation

IOM - The International Organisation for Migration

MDGs – The United Nations Millennium Development Goals

MoE - Ministry of Education or National Education Secretariat

NGDO – Non-Governmental Development Organisation

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

NMFA - The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NNGO – Northern Non-Governmental Organisation

Norad – The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

NRC – The Norwegian Refugee Council

OCHA - The United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PAC – Proyecto Aprendiendo Crecemos – As we learn we grow project

RECOMPAS – Corporación Red de Consejos Comunitarios del Pacifico Sur - the corporation *the Network of Community Councils of the South Pacific*

SC – Save the Children

SCC – Save the Children Canada

SCI – Save the Children International

SCiC – Save the Children in Colombia

SET – Education Secretariat of Tumaco

SNGO – Southern Non-Governmental Development Organisation

Udenar – The University of Nariño

UNAD – The National University Open and at Distance

UNESCO – The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNHCR – The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Unicauca – The University of Cauca

UNICEF – The United Nations Children's Fund

WB – The World Bank

WFP – The United Nations World Food Programme

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

VLE – Proyecto Vive la Educación – the Education Lives project

1 INTRODUCTION

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world

(Nelson Mandela)

1.1 Development in the South

In a developmental perspective, what role can education play in improving the life conditions for marginalised groups affected by armed conflict, natural disasters and general poverty? Which entity is best qualified for the organisation and implementation of education for development in the geographical “South”, and how should education be funded? What right does an international non-governmental development organisation (INGDO) have to intervene on foreign territory? How is education prioritised within developmental aid and humanitarian assistance? When it comes to education for development, is an NGO better off working alone, in partnership with other NGOs, and/or with other public and private entities? This paper is a contribution to an ongoing discussion concerning how education for development should be managed in the South.

Education provision is considered one of several strategies for development in the South. This paper will discuss why education is considered to be important in both a humanitarian and development context, and how it is considered significant as a factor for human development. We will present that education is a central strategy and one of the main approaches for humanitarian assistance in situations of armed conflict and natural disasters, as well as in a development context. We also show that this subject has gained increased attention from various stakeholders in the field, ranging from NGOs and governments to donors and multinational organisations working with humanitarian and development assistance.

The last couple of decades have seen an increase in the number and size of various types of non-governmental organisations (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009, p. 298), (Potter, Binns, Elliott, & Smith, 2008, pp. 316-319) and (Fowler, 1991, p. 5). A huge number of different NGOs are currently working in the South, and it is quite common that several NGOs, aside from other UN bodies, operate in the same area within the same aid sectors, such as education. Although NGOs and UN bodies work shoulder to shoulder, several examples show that they do not co-

operate nor share information, neither amongst each other nor with the national government or even engage local human resources like Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and communitarian councils (CBOs). Apart from that, NGOs attempt to demonstrate that their projects obtain the planned results. In some cases this has led to critique from the donors funding the aid projects. In some cases, we can also argue that aid organisations are better of working alone. This paper will have focus on the potential of partnership and co-operation between NGOs working with education, and between the state and local communitarian councils.

Currently there exist various incentives for effective planning of partnerships between aid agents, both including the state and the civil society. We will debate that a partnership can have several advantages, and even be indispensable for obtaining better results in aid projects, due to the sharing and interchange of knowledge, technical capacity and specialisation. The application of partnership is sometimes a prerequisite for the financing of aid projects. On the other hand, we will also discuss whether there are possible negative effects of the partnership strategy.

Armed conflict leads to forced human displacement. A common nominator for the conflicts of today is that they are internalised within the national borders of countries, instead of being fought between nations: “Current conflicts tend to originate as localized, intrastate conflicts. With a few notable exceptions, conflicts are now fought primarily between forces *within* a state” (Desai & Potter, 2006, p. 72). According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2013 more than 50 million people were registered as displaced (2014). This is the first time since WW2 that we reach this number. In the category of displaced people we find both refugees (16,7 million people who have fled their home country), internally displaced persons (IDPs, 33,7 million of them, who have been forced to move to other areas within their country), and asylum seekers (1,2 million seeking protection in a foreign country).

1.2 Education for Development

Education provision in areas experiencing high levels of armed conflict and displacement is severely affected by the humanitarian situation, and a wide range of international and national development organisations are actively working to improve the access to and quality of

education. This paper examines partner organisations that co-operate to improve the access to basic education for marginalised children and youth¹ in South-western Colombia. These include non-governmental partners such as NGOs and CBOs and public education authorities and institutions. The case study illustrates that there are several factors which combined provoke a huge demand for the distribution and improvement of basic education to displaced people and a marginalised minority population.

1.2.1 Why is the Subject Important?

Today, the United Nations' (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been adopted by many countries. Goal number two states: "Achieve Universal Primary Education" (UN, 2014b). Considering the high numbers of NGOs, Tvedt states that, due to their increased international activities and presence within the development scheme, NGOs are now popular and important subjects for research activity (Tvedt, 1998).

In recent years, organisations like the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) and several NGOs highlight the importance of education as an approach within humanitarian response as well as development assistance. Many development organisations believe that it is necessary to co-ordinate their work. For instance, NMFA advocates the partnership strategy, both in terms of co-operating with other donors and aid receiving governments and with civil society, where working with education is considered a part of a development strategy (NMFA, 2003). Amongst others, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has already for several years categorised education as the fourth pillar within humanitarian response, together with nourishment, shelter and health services because refugee and displaced children are vulnerable and many of them need psychological stability (Crisp, Talbot, & Cipollone, 2001).

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was established in 1991 to co-ordinate the development sector. Its main goal is to coordinate humanitarian response in emergencies, where their first pillar is to broaden the coalition for multilateral humanitarian action, advocating for partnerships (OCHA, 2014a). Another important co-ordinating entity is the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Since 1961, the OECD works to become an international forum the world's leading aid donors, comprising of 29

¹ With youth we mean persons up to the age of 26

members, including the European Union and countries that are identified as the largest aid contributors (OECD, 2014). Other initiatives that seek to raise co-ordination are the Paris declaration on aid effectiveness from 2005 and the Monterrey consensus from 2002. The latter is an agreement where “developing” countries that receive aid are made responsible for their own development while receiving (financial) support from “developed countries”. The Paris declaration functions as a statement for resolving partnership commitments amongst more than 60 bilateral, multilateral and civil society aid donors (Brannelly, Ndaruhutse, & Rigaud, 2009). The large degree of different levels of co-operation and co-ordination gives incentives for nuanced research on the field.

In other words, this paper contributes to the ongoing debate on education for development, and discussed how states, national and international aid organisations can work together with the local society towards the aim of sustainable development in the South by means of formal education. It also debates the comprehension of North-South cooperation and how this can be elaborated in a result-oriented way. Further on, the paper adds to the debate on the effects of developmental assistance, posing the question whether it should be the donors, the state, parents, or the civil society that should be responsible for education planning? Or is it a combination of the former mentioned stakeholders?

1.3 Confining the Case

1.3.1 Research Topic

Based on the presented context, this paper focuses on the ability and understanding of partnership between aid agents working in the field of education. In our case, this means co-operation and co-ordination between southern and northern Non-Governmental Development Organisations (NGDOs), governments and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The paper elaborates on relationship dynamics between different actors in the field of delivering education in complex humanitarian situations with several risk factors.

1.3.2 Hypothesis Setting the Groundwork for the Research

In this section we mention the most central hypothesis which lays the groundwork for our research questions. By hypothesis we mean theories that help us to structure our problems of

discussion, and our research project in general. The hypothesis also serve as foundations for the design of the further investigation (Johannessen, Tufte, & Christoffersen, 2010, p. 86).

- NGOs work with education where the national government has low levels of responsibility. The NGO implementation for education is not sustainable, due to changing priorities by donors. This leads to development projects being terminated due to insufficient funding, interfering with the idea of a long-term focus and follow-up measures necessary for a high success rate for the project.
- NGOs work within financial restrictions on how and where their education projects are to be elaborated, linked to the donor's interests, priorities, and policies on how financial contributions to development are to be applied. This in turn may affect the relation between the donor and the receiving development organisations because the latter may have to change their strategies to comply with donor interests.
- It can be challenging to co-operate with national governments, if the labour of the NGOs is not acknowledged (Miller-Grandvaux, Welmond, & Wolf, 2002). This compromises the influence the education projects have on the local society as well as possible influence on public regulations towards the education sector.
- There is little co-operation between development organisations active in the same area and/or with the same sector, such as education. This denotes that the organisations work independently from each other, which again can lead to projects having lesser impact according to the theory that organisations can increase their impact when working together and sharing information and strategies.
- The idea of partnership as a condition for receiving development funds, is not actually working. By this we mean that northern and southern NGOs do not comply with a reciprocal balanced influence on the planning of development projects. Instead, northern NGOs and donors dominate the partnership since they are financing the education projects.

1.3.3 The Research Questions

Based on the previous hypothesis, the following research questions have been elaborated and will guide the data collection:

1. How do the partners perceive the North-South co-operation for education and the idea of partnership?
2. Why do the partners co-operate for education, and what are the foundations for co-operation?
3. How are the roles defined in terms of co-ordination?

It is not possible to investigate everything concerning a partnership; therefore we have to develop some indicators that will help us in the search for answers to our research questions. Hence, we have constructed the following indicators for the study: *Understanding of partnership; Equality in decision making/Transparency; Communication; Local empowerment; Co-ordination; Expectations/common goals; Challenges; and Sustainability*. By sustainability we mean that the partnership is well-functioning and will continue to exist. The indicators are based on a theoretical framework used to identify partnership strategies amongst development organisations, presented in chapter 3. In chapter 2 we further present how the indicators are applied to the study.

Topics for the study and operationalisation of the research questions

The above mentioned indicators are similar to the topics of the study, which helps to structure the data collection:

- Training of local entities such as CSOs, CBOs and Education Institutions (EIs), implementing local empowerment.
- The idea of partnership and balanced participation.
- Advocacy towards the education system.
- Relations between the partners.
- Sustainability – (common) goals for the future, the role of education authorities.
- The amount of co-operation between the partners and division of responses.
- Agendas and outcomes each partner has with the co-operation. Do they have common priorities?
- Financing and the role of the donor.
- How differences between humanitarian assistance and development aid influences the strategies of the involved NNGOs, and the amount/existence of cultural differences between all involved partners in the project.
- Level of co-operation with UN-bodies such as UNHCR, UNICEF and UNDP
- Education quality

1.3.4 Justification of Research Site

The municipality of Tumaco is located on the Colombian Pacific coast. Compared to the rest of the country, the area is severely affected by armed conflict, and has large areas with difficult access due to obstruction by water and poor infrastructure. There was more research on the Pacific coast before the armed conflict reached the area, for instance by the Colombian social anthropologist Arturo Escobar. Due to the ongoing armed conflict, there is little investigation on the area. A partnership study on Tumaco was chosen since the area has a high presence of NGOs and international development organisations. It is reported that around 20 NGOs are working in the area, mainly independent from governmental agencies and other NGOs. Simultaneously it is an area with high levels of IDPs, and large amounts of out-of-school children and youth are reported in the area. The predominantly Afro-Colombian population tends to feel itself abandoned by the rest of the country (Personal communication with ANSPE staff, 2012).

The World Bank reports that there are several countries showing great discrepancy in the case of education quality and enrolment numbers, listing several countries where the illiteracy rate amongst the total adult population is less than 50% such as in the cases of Niger (15%), Chad (37%) and the Ivory Coast (41%) (2013b). Currently, many countries are affected by different levels of armed conflict or show great deficits in education services and general development with no efficient public education institutions. This sometimes leads the NGOs themselves to take charge in tuition, a form of non-formal education.

The case of Colombia differs from the mentioned African countries, since it has strong governmental institutions and there is an estimated national literacy rate of 94% according to CIA (2014). Public school enrolment figures are high. Education is managed through the National Ministry of Education (MoE), which has secretariats throughout the country on local, regional and departmental levels. Therefore, national and international NGOs work towards the strengthening of the public education system, where they contribute with financial support and technical expertise rather than offering non-formal education. This dynamic can be compared to a Public-Private Partnership (PPP), since several INGOs and national NGOs work together with UN bodies as well as other NGOs, state entities, education institutions (EIs) and public universities, forming different levels of co-operation and partnerships within education. Nevertheless, Colombia contrasts from other states faced with armed conflict and complex emergency situations because the Colombian government has

developed frameworks for the protection of victims of the conflict, but has challenges in implementing these policies (NRC, 2014b).

Colombia is not a typical recipient of development aid, as it is categorised as an upper middle-income country and therefore considered capable of providing adequate education services. As of 2014, Colombia is the fourth biggest economy in Latin America and has the third biggest population in the region, with more than 46 million habitants (CIA, 2014). According to a source in a Colombian NGO working with education, the former president Alvaro Uribe (who governed between 2002 and 2010), informed the international society that the country was in no position of needing international aid of any kind (Education manager Colombian NGO, 2013). Nor did he admit that the country was facing a critical situation, with millions of people being internally displaced.

When one takes into account the means of measurement, the case study shows that one will get different numbers for school enrolment when one changes the focus from a national to a regional or local level, if one leaves out the pupils above school-age that are enrolled in the education system.

Colombia is currently experiencing a complex humanitarian situation, leading to situations where children and youth are deprived their right to school attendance. Furthermore, the country is ranged as one of the most unequal countries in the world in terms of income distribution. For the measurement of income inequality, the GINI index is commonly used. The higher the number, the greater is the inequality of income on a national scale (the index ranges from 0 = no equality, to 100 = maximum equality). WB figures for 2010 show that Colombia has a GINI of 55,9. As a comparison, Norway has an index of 25,79 (2014).

1.3.5 The Structure of the Thesis

This paper has the following structure:

- In chapter 2 the methodological framework is presented, introducing the technical design of the study and discusses the data collection method.
- Chapter 3 gives a theoretical background for the role of education in development aid and humanitarian assistance and presents the outlines of a theoretical framework for NGO partnerships and how this can be applied to education.

- Chapter 4 contextualises the current situation in Colombia in terms of armed conflict, the humanitarian situation, and how education is affected. It also discusses the role of the Colombian government within education and international co-operation for aid.
- Chapter 5 presents the partnership with its partners based on the collected data
- Chapter 6 analyses the partnership and the roles of the involved partners
- Chapter 7 is reserved for the general conclusions

Summary

This chapter positioned the case study in a theoretical framework, highlighting the increasing numbers of NGOs working with humanitarian assistance and development, including education. The large amount of development organisations is said to give support for higher levels of co-ordination amongst the NGOs and other stakeholders in development aid, creating new challenges for decision-making and the management of development projects.

2 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

This chapter centres on the design of the methodological framework, including planning, collection and analysis of data necessary for the structuring of the research project. Firstly, the selection of the case study-method is justified. Secondly, the discussion will centre on the available choices of sources for the research project and how they can be applied to the study. Finally, we highlight some challenges centred on the data collection and the role of the investigator in the field. Therefore, we need to elaborate a research design for our study as a way of assuring reliability and validity of the project.

2.1.1 Research Design

We are studying a partnership between two northern development NGOs (NDNGOs), who work as partners with Colombian NGOs, a Colombian local CBO as well as local and national education authorities and education institutions (EIs). For this purpose, we need to elaborate a plan for the investigation. According to Johannessen et al. (2010, pp. 73-74), a research design relates to the procedure that includes all aspects encompassing the project, ranging from the planning phase to the final phase of handing in the project. Yin defines a research design as “the logic that links the data to be collected to the initial questions of study” (Yin, 2009, p. 24). Further on, it is necessary to define *what* and *who* we want to investigate, and also *how* the project is to be completed.

Yin (2009, p. 8) states that the selection of method depends on three conditions: (1) The type of research question posed, (2) The extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events, and (3) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events. The case study approach is suitable as a manner to gather as much information as possible about a limited subject, such as an occurrence within for instance an organisation. It serves to study one or several incidents thoroughly, giving the researcher the possibility to complete a detailed study in which one identifies the most relevant factors given the research questions (Johannessen et al., 2010, pp. 75, 85). Here one is also given the possibility to complete a thorough study to identify the most relevant aspects for the researcher and his or

hers research questions concerning specific aspects around a given case (Ragin & Amoroso, 2011, p. 115), something that fits our partnership study.

Our case concerns temporary events, something that supports the use of case study. When choosing the case study method, the advantage is to have a range of different data collections options available, meaning that the method serves to study an event using multiple sources (Yin, 2009, p. 11).

2.1.2 Validity and Reliability

As a way of ensuring the quality of the research design and thereby the investigation in the design process of the case study, it is necessary to have some criteria for trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability and data dependability (Yin, 2009, p. 40). These criteria can be met by taking into consideration the *validity* and *reliability* of the study.

To construct validity, the concepts being studied need to be identified using correct operational matters. Also, when linking relationships, we need to assure that certain conditions really lead to other conditions, and thereby we avoid spurious associations. This means that we have to choose relevant indicators for the study that reflect the study's questions. Furthermore, the research has to be carried out in way that gives it generalisability. The latter refers to an analytic generalisation rather than a statistical generalization. A study has both internal and external validity, where the former refers to a causal relationship rather than a spurious one, whereas the latter deals with the extent in which it is possible to generalise from the study's findings (Yin, 2009, pp. 40-42). Finally, validity relates to how well, or how relevant the data presenting the phenomena that is to be investigated actually is (Johannessen et al., 2010, p. 408).

For a study to be reliable, "[the researcher has] to be sure that, if a later investigator followed the same procedures as described by an earlier investigator and conducted the same case study all over again, the later investigator should arrive at the same findings and conclusions" (Yin, 2009, p. 45). This means that the research procedures have to be well documented, making it possible for a potential external reviewer to understand the different steps made in the procedure. Throughout the thesis, validity and reliability will be commented on.

2.2 Yin's Five Point Research Design

According to Yin (2009, p. 27), a research design needs five components: (1) A study's questions; (2) its propositions, if any; (3) its unit(s) of analysis; (4) the logic linking the data to the propositions; and (5) the criteria for interpreting the findings. This research design is to have a logical sequence, connecting the empirical data with the initial research questions.

To identify the data that is to be collected, it is necessary to establish a theory depicting the types of answers one expects linked to the chosen research questions (Yin, 2009, pp. 35-36). By theory it is meant here hypothesis on possible correlations, a possible theory that has yet to be confirmed. We need to be clear of what we look for, and therefore we need hypothesis to guide the research ahead. Here we have to ascertain that we do not merely select the data that confirm that our theory (hypothesis) is correct, and by that consciously or unconsciously refrain to take into consideration the information that not suits our arguments (Kjeldstadli, 1999, p. 138). Since the subjects for the research tend to be complex, it is necessary with a theory that serves to simplify correlations. Generalisations, models and general rules can all be seen as theory, according to Nordby (2008).

2.2.1 Research Questions

The study's questions presented in the introductory chapter set the bases for the selection of the methodological framework, and fit well in the case study approach with their classification as "how" and "why" questions.

2.2.2 The Study's Propositions

The second component focuses on the study's propositions, if any. According to Yin (2009, p. 28), although we have stated our research questions, we still need to figure out *what* we should study to be able to answer the questions, in other words, determine *what* helps us to structure *where* to look for relevant evidence. Regarding our case, a proposition is that northern and southern (development) organisations work together to strengthen the quality of and enrolment in education, leaning towards the understanding of that the entities work better together. Another proposition is that northern development organisations depend on local knowledge and recourses for a successful implementation of their development projects. These propositions help us to narrow down the units for our case study.

2.2.3 Units of Analysis

The third component in the research design discusses the *unit(s) of analysis*. This section defines *what* the “case” is, something that according to Yin is a fundamental problem for many investigators to be consistent with (2009, p. 29). For our project, the case is the partnership established between several entities working with education directed to marginalised children and youth, aimed mainly towards the displaced population and minority groups. Therefore, in our case, we are dealing with an embedded single-case design which includes several subunits of analysis (Yin, 2009, p. 46). In other words, the partnership is our unit, while the involved partners are referred to as subunits, as seen below:

Unit of analysis: The partnership/education project	
Subunits of analysis:	
<p><i>Southern partners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RECOMPAS (local CBO) • Education Secretary of Tumaco (SET) • National Ministry of Education (MoE) • University of Nariño (Udenar) • National University Open and at Distance (UNAD) • University of Cauca (Unicauca) • Education Institutions (EIs) • 2 Colombian NGOs 	<p><i>Northern partners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) • Save the Children in Colombia (SCiC) • Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA – donor)

Table I: The unit and subunits in the embedded single-case design

Although there are many subunits, the focus for the investigation is primarily on the relation between NRC, SC and the local CBO, *la corporación Red de Consejos Comunitarios del Pacífico Sur*, the Network of Community Councils of the South Pacific Corporation (RECOMPAS), and to a lesser degree includes SET, and MoE (the local and national public education authorities).

According to Yin, a single-case design can be used when the case is either: (a) a critical test of existing theory, (b) a rare or unique circumstance, or (c) a representative or typical case, or where the case serves a (d) revelatory or € longitudinal purpose (2009, p. 52). As for our case, we want to test an existing theory with a representative case, so we have several of the conditions to complete a single-case study. If we would have more time and resources available, a multiple-case design would be preferable, linking this to the previous discussion on the problem of generalisation and theory construction originated from just one case. As we discussed, the single-case strategy puts limitations on the possibility to generalise around a single case study, since the conclusions originating from this type of studies are much stronger if they can be compared to other studies, although these limitations are not categorical (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 220). We could have run several (multiple) case studies on the same subject of North/South partnerships for education, but in different geographical locations in the country and with different partners. This would be a procedure to replicate a case study, compared to the replication of an experiment. This procedure could strengthen or weaken our results based on the possible outcomes.

2.2.4 The Logic of Linking the Data to the Propositions and Criteria for Interpreting the Findings

The fourth step in Yin's research design relates to how data should be collected in order to analyse it, which in turn will lay the groundwork for the conclusions and results. This is also linked with the fifth step, where we need to arrange some criteria for how to interpret the results.

Operationalisation

As a way of concretising the research questions for the study, we demarcate the area in focus of the study into specific categories which are easier to measure in our data collection phase (Johannessen et al., 2010, p. 63). This is also known as the operationalisation of a study. The mentioned categories are known as indicators for the research, which were briefly presented in the introductory chapter.

Research indicators

It is necessary to elaborate different indicators that will contribute to sustain or reject the research questions, giving us the needed answers. Indicators typically form simplified representations of a complex phenomenon, and are easier to respond to than the research questions themselves. According to Johannessen et al (2010, p. 64), it is unmanageable to investigate “everything”. Therefore, it is necessary to construct indicators that guide the research process. Indicators are representative to the phenomena being investigated.

In the planning stage for creating the indicators, we have to keep in mind that the two NDNGOs are well-experienced in that their development projects are being evaluated by the donors and external entities. In this case, as part of the sources used for the investigation, external evaluations have been used to better understand how the projects are functioning, from a donor’s point of view. Therefore, it has never been the goal of this study to assess the project in a similar way as done previously by other controlling entities. On the other side, the local CBO has lesser experience in project management, and it is possible that they have a different culture of project planning and the evaluation of project achievement. Thus, methodologically, the indicators help to measure the level of affirmation for the different subjects. For instance one measures how the partners think of the idea of partnership, and how they deal with this in practice. If the partners agree on a common understanding of partnership, it will contribute to confirm the actual co-operation between them.

The chosen indicators are selected from NGO partnership theory presented in the next chapter. As the reader knows, this thesis seeks to outline the relations between international and national organisations working with education in Colombia. Since we have stated that there can be unbalanced relations between southern and northern organisations, we outline in more detail our indicators which will guide the design of the case study:

- *Understanding of partnership* - How does each partner understand the established partnership?
- *Equality in decision making* - What are the comments among the partners on the issue of equality in terms of decision making and planning
- *Local empowerment* - According to the partners, to what degree is the partnership leading to local empowerment?

- *Co-ordination* - Who is responsible for the implementation of necessary activities related to the project? How is the communication between the partners?
- *Communication and transparency* – How transparent is the partnership in terms of information exchange and how (often) does communication occur?
- *Expectations and common goals* – to which degree can it be said that the partners share a mutual understanding of project outcomes?
- *Challenges* – according to the partners, what are the main challenges in the partnership?
- *Sustainability* – what can be said about the sustainability of the North/South co-operation, and what are the opinions of the partners about continued co-operation, as well as project sustainability?

The above mentioned indicators are used to determine our results. For this, we have to give them certain values. To elaborate on this, we will show some examples of how we measure our indicators. For example, considering the first indicator *partnership*, the researcher is looking for how each partner understands the concept. If the partners agree on the understanding of partnership, the indicator contributes to strengthen the belief that the relationship is working. For the next indicator *equality in decision making*, we look for equality between the partners in terms of this issue. Thus, if both southern and northern partners interfere on an equal basis, the partnership model is further strengthened. If the partners have frequent communication, the communication is defined as good. A final example is the indicator *local empowerment*. For many development projects, this issue is considered central for a well-functioning partnership. If the data shows that the partnership has increased knowledge, technical management and other human resources with the local partners such as the local CBO and education authorities, the indicator will sustain that the NNGDOs are transferring specific knowledge that the local partners need in order to continue the project in a later stage without the presence of the former entities.

Lastly, the indicators help us to establish the level and type of partnerships that exist between the northern and southern organisations, following the theory of Alan Fowler. The partnership concept is discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

Rival explanations

Apart from the indicators, Yin (2009, p. 34) states that an important strategy is to elaborate rival explanations for the findings, something that we do prior to the data collection. As was presented in the introduction chapter, this forms an alternative to show statistical significance using p-values, which would better suit a quantitative study. This will augment the study's validity and reliability. Therefore, we think of the other possibilities that can affect how the relationship is working in practice. For instance, the context in which each partner is situated can affect how the partnership is perceived. It would be natural to assume that the partners have different perspectives on the partnership according to their background and prior experiences. The relationships with public entities can also be stronger than one assumes. It is also possible that the NGOs have high levels of freedom in terms of project design and implementation, without being restrained from the donor. It is also possible that the NGOs have long traditions of co-operation with other NGO and public partners.

2.3 Case study

The case study method has more or less been incorporated as a complement to other existing methods, but applicable literature is now readily available on the matter, and although there still are some discussions on its validity and reliability, it has gained acceptance as an alternative way to elaborate a research project. In this part, the work of Robert Yin, *Case Study Research* (2009), is mainly used as a source for our research design. Basically, the case study method is understood as: “an empirical inquiry that (a) investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when (b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Apart from this, it also serves to structure the whole process from the development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. More than simply guiding specific data collection techniques, case study is an all-compassing model to structure a complete research project.

2.3.1 Considerations on the use of the method

Although the case study method receives much positive appraisal, it also receives criticism. One central concern refers to a lack of rigour, stating that the method is not used in a systematic way, or that the findings may be biased to correlate with desired outcomes. It is argued that this lack of rigour can be avoided through the use of other methods, that possibly

are easier to use due to easier access to detailed texts helping to structure the research from A to Z, something that case study is lacking, considering that there are fewer writings available on the subject (Yin, 2009, p. 14).

Another common critique is that case studies provide little basis for scientific generalisation, if one considers that one has to do with a single case or a very limited number of cases. This critique has been countered with another question: “How can you generalise findings from a single experiment?” This statement highlights that scientific facts rarely are based on just one single experiment, but rather on several of them. Rather, it is more accurate to say that case studies and experiments both serve to generalise on theoretical propositions, and not on populations or universes (Yin, 2009, p. 15).

A third criticism towards the case study method is directed to the process as being too long, which in turn leads to high amounts of unreadable documents. According to Yin, this aspect can have some relevance to former case studies, but he also asserts that this has to do with the misinterpretation of the case study method as being an ethnographic one, an approach that usually includes long periods of time working in the “field”. Rather, Yin claims that it is possible to do a valid and high-quality case study from ones home office using the Internet or the telephone, all depending on the scale of the investigation. In many ways, instead of assessing the method as an alternative approach, it should rather be seen as a complementing methodology to more traditional ones, such as the conduction of experiments. Anyhow, a successful implementation of a case study implicates a well-structured design (Yin, 2009, pp. 15-16).

2.3.2 Confining the case

Our case depicts a partnership between units that mainly works on a local level in the Tumaco municipality in the Nariño department of Colombia, although the partnership comprises education projects in several areas of both the Nariño and Cauca departments, but the study focuses mainly on the Tumaco, since it gives a good representation of the functionality of the partnership.

The partnership refers to two development projects, in which most of the former mentioned subunits are active. The first project was launched in 2008. Thus, in a time frame, the study

focuses on a partnership that has existed since 2008, and includes the initial start-up phase of the second project, which took place in 2013.

2.4 Field work

Compared to a quantitative method, when collecting qualitative data the researcher's role is more prominent in the data collection, meaning that the process of the data collection is more difficult compared to the handling of quantitative data, referring to the issue of the instrument used being less elaborated and less established on beforehand. On the other side, when collecting quantitative data, the measurement instrument is the most important link in the design. Such instruments have to be thoroughly elaborated, structured and tested in advance to assure their effectiveness. Generally, the implication of the researcher is more important during the collection of qualitative data compared to quantitative data (Grønmo, 1998, pp. 90-91).

2.4.1 Types of Data Sources

Concerning secondary sources, we have mainly used documents written by the two northern NGOs, as well as some UN and official Colombian sources. Mainly internal non-published and published documentation was collected from several partners, particularly from NRC and SCiC. In lesser degree documentation was collected from MoE, SET, RECOMPAS and the co-operating universities. We have also included sources that stem from both external and internal evaluations of the development projects that both NRC and SC are running in Colombia.

Johannessen et al (2010, p. 86) state that it is an advantage to combine multiple data sources when conducting a case study, where the goal is to obtain as much data as possible on the chosen subject. The use of multiple sources also constructs validity for the study. As for primary sources, mainly interviews were used, including non-formal conversations and focus groups interviews. Participatory and non-participatory observations were also used for data collection. The initial plan was to include all the partners involved in the partnership, though some of them are more relevant than others due to their proximity and their involvement in the partnership for education. Therefore, the same subunits that comprise the partnership as

listed earlier also serve as primary sources for the data collection. As for IEs, four local schools serve as sources for interviews and observation.

Apart from consulting the regional partners in South-west Colombia, interviews were also conducted with NRC staff in Oslo, Norway, NRC staff in Bogota, NMFA in Bogota, and staff at a Colombian NGO working with education in another department of the country. During the planning and conduction of the field work, the researcher chose to focus primordially on the relations between NRC, SCiC, RECOMPAS, the EIs, SET and the universities, since their relation reflects the main North/South divide and therefore best represents the topic of the study, according to the investigator. Finally, apart from the sources being categorised as less relevant, due to constraints with time and economical resources, no interviews were conducted with CIDA or MoE, which are situated in Bogota.

2.4.2 Method for Data Collection

In the planning phase of the study, several documents serving as a protocol for the study were designed to help the investigator with keeping an overview, and serve to maintain and structure the study. The documents also serve to connect the different stages of the project, expected to increase the validity of the investigation. In these documents, we wrote down the research questions, rival explanations and our sources, as well as a plan for how we are to collect the necessary data. Additionally, a database with raw-data was created to keep track of the primary sources. All the former measures strengthen the validity and reliability, since it makes our case study more transparent and makes it possible to trace the different phases of the project, something that also increases the possibility to monitor the theory afterwards (Yin, 2009, p. 45). It is preferred to have several sources stating the same with similar outcomes. Ideally, the investigator wants sources with contrary tendency; if two sources with opposing point of departure assert the same meanings, the confidence towards the statement is strengthened (Kjeldstadli, 1999, p. 178).

Interviews

The indicators and study objects were applied to design the interview guides. Moreover, the subjects also have relevance for the supplementary data collection methods. The advantage of using interviews is that they are insightful and goal-oriented; they focus directly on the subjects of the case study. Weaknesses regarding this strategy are that the answers can be of

bad quality, especially when the questions are poorly formulated. The possibility of information errors or even direct lies in the answers, as well as the risk that respondents may reply what he or she considers to be what the interviewer wants to hear, are other disadvantages of interviews for data collection according to Yin (2009, p. 102). Moreover, the enactment of the interview itself also needs to be addressed in an ethical way; for instance we need to assure that we avoid the use of leading questions, while at the same time evade asking questions that can be understood as threatening, since good answers depend on a good relation with the interviewee.

Considerations of the use of interviews

Furthermore, it is necessary to request consent from the respondents, as well as to examine Colombian regulations for data collection and storage. As for this particular issue, a formal consent letter was elaborated in Spanish and used in most of the interviews, except from a few made with NRC and SCiC staff, where it was considered not to be necessary when asked. The informants were also guaranteed full discretion in terms of that their names would not appear in the final work. The applied letter of consent is found under attachments. The informants were also informed about the project and how their data would be used. The investigator brought a letter from his university faculty department to gain confidence. This was translated into Spanish and worked as a formal confirmation of the fieldwork. Some of the interviewees showed an interest for the final results of the investigation. As for the issue of data collection and permits, the investigator contacted the Colombian embassy in Oslo with the inquiry. The reply was that it was not necessary to formally request permission to complete a master's study in Colombia with the data collection method presented.

Interviews are a common strategy for the collection of qualitative data. It was chosen to use semi-structured interviews since this technique makes it possible to highlight the complex social phenomenon that is the subject of the study. If we were to use a standardised design, we would leave out flexibility, which could lead to important information not being collected (Johannessen et al., 2010, p. 138). Several interview guides were designed; one for RECOMPAS, school staff and universities, another for NRC and SC, and a third for SET. These guides are also among the attachments. In designing the guides, it was important to avoid mixing the two types of questions: (1) The research questions, and (2) the questions directed towards the interviewee, since they are composed differently, and last but not least

we cannot expect that the interviewee is able to respond directly to the research questions (Johannessen et al., 2010, p. 136). The guides are based on a template found in Johannessen et al (2010, pp. 141-142), which categorises the interview in the following sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Fact questions, (3). Introductory questions, (4) transitional questions, (5) key questions, and (6) closing questions.

In addition to interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and informal conversations were also used. The advantage of these approaches is that they cover events in real time in their real surroundings, as well as providing contextual information on the case. However, these strategies are time consuming, and can also lead to selectivity, meaning that the researcher fails to observe what really should be observed. Moreover, the investigator also risks to bias the events with his or her presence (Yin, 2009, p. 102).

Selection of sources

Since we deal with several units, where every one of them consists of many people, it is essential to make a selection, also known as *sampling* for the data collection. Methodologically, sampling should be random to avoid selecting only those expected to confirm our hypothesis. At the same time, one needs to assure that the selected participants are representable for the case. Therefore, it makes sense to collect data from the people who in different ways have been active in the partnership for education, for example the NGO and CBO staff working directly with the education project. In a certain way, considering the difficulty for the investigator to gain access to relevant sources, the snowball-method was used, meaning that the researcher asked NGO staff involved in the project to help him get in touch with relevant people. A certain problem with this strategy is that NGO staff can select informants that represent certain preferred opinions, leaving out others. Still, this is not considered to be a big risk, also since there are only few people involved in the project.

When it comes to interviews, there is no limitation on how many the researcher may need. As a general rule, it is said that 10 to 15 are common, or one completes the task when the data is saturated and the investigator no longer receives new information (Johannessen et al., 2010, p. 104). In total 33 persons gave their feedback, where 23 persons were recorded in 13 interviews. Five of the interviews were with two persons or more. The interviews usually lasted for about an hour. The other persons were consulted through informal conversations.

Most of the consulted persons were either co-ordinators, consultants or officials who have been and are active working in the alliance.

2.4.3 Data Collection in the Field

Related to validity and reliability, and to ensure accuracy, most of the interviews have been recorded, and several of them have later been transcribed in full length. During field work, all observations related to the study and interviews were written down, usually during observation or directly after the interviews took place. This means that, after interviews, the investigator went through them and his notes, and added comments and observations while they still were remembered. In some cases, this labour was done later on the same day.

A total number of 20 pages of field notes have been written down and marked with location, topic and date. Many of the observation notes and interview guides were written in Norwegian to avoid that people proximate to the investigator could get the chance of reading them without consent. It was observed at several occasions, especially in the schools, that people tried to read the writing. Also, the researcher made weekly calendars where interviews and other activities were placed. All contact and correspondence be it through the means of e-mail or phone calls were registered with date, contact information and further communication. All documents related to the study were synchronised with the internet immediately after their creation, so that the researcher would have backup data in case of loss of computer or unforeseen problems with the Colombian government.

After some initial contact and interviews with NRC staff in Oslo, it was decided to collect data in the field between October and December 2013. Before deciding on the geographical point of departure for the study, the researcher established contact with NRC and SCiC staff at their head offices in Bogota for advice, permissions and interviews. Originally the study was to include only NRC, but since SCiC is part of the partnership, it was also necessary to include the organisation in the study. Other education projects in different parts of Colombia were considered, and several UN bodies were contacted in the planning phase, but the Tumaco case seemed to be of special relevance for the research project. More on, it was difficult to establish communication with the UN entities; many hesitated to respond to the master's students requests. After three interviews with Bogota-based education staff there from NRC, and one with SCiC staff, it was decided to continue with the data collection in Tumaco, in close co-operation with both NRC and SCiC. One main challenge was the

transport issue. Since over land-transport was complicated in the area, it was decided to fly down to Tumaco, and later, on leaving Tumaco heading for Pasto and the inland to meet up with informants at the universities, the researcher was assigned transportation with NRC staff. It simply would not have been possible to travel to the area without the necessary support of the two NGOs due to security measures.

Ideally the researcher would have spent more time in the field, but this was problematic due to the security issues. At the time of the field work, Tumaco was not considered a safe place to travel to, and all unnecessary travels to the area should be avoided. As of April 2015, just like in 2013, for instance the British government advises against all travel to the Tumaco region (The Foreign and Commonwealth Office of Great Britain, 2015).

2.4.4 Ethical Considerations

One important advantage for the investigator is that he is not employed by any of the involved NGOs, nor working for the donor or a stakeholder with any other special interests in the project that can affect subjectivity. By this we mean that the researcher has no interests in leading the investigation to certain favourable results in any way. Many studies written on NGOs and education are written by UN staff or other development organisations. This could possibly intervene in how the work is being evaluated, keeping in mind that this possibly can lead to projects being presented as more successful than they are in fact, to assure continued financing from donors. Nevertheless, it is not likely that the investigator is completely objective, since he establishes personal relations with many people involved in the education projects.

Another main concern for data collection was the role as researcher. Since he was both following SC and NRC, he sometimes felt that information and planning “crossed” between them. Sometimes he felt “affiliated” with the one or the other NGO. This sometimes led to the need of having to choose between the two of them when they were operating their projects simultaneously. Most of the observation has been with the work of SCiC, and in some lesser degree with NRC, since the latter entity at the time mainly worked in rural areas, while SC focused more on the urban setting. Regarding NRC, the collected data consists mainly of interviews with local and national staff. Many of the rural areas are dominated by armed groups such as the FARC-EP, complicating the presence of the investigator there. Last but not least, the presence of the researcher created some attention, especially due to the fact that

there are few foreigners coming to the area and that the local population is around 95% Afro-Colombian, while the researcher is of Caucasian descendent.

SC has several projects in Tumaco, but the personal working in the alliance share office with NRC. During the field work the researcher was allowed to work in this office, which was useful for establishing contacts and observing the alliance in real life. NRC and SC also share offices in Pasto (capital of the Nariño department) and Popayan (capital of the Cauca department), which is a part of the agreement with CIDA (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013).

2.4.5 Challenges during Field Work

Some drawbacks that the researcher encountered were, apart from cultural differences, some challenges with the communication. This can have consequences on how verbal communication was understood, contributing to the risk of misinterpretation. The researcher has an advanced level of Spanish, but still there were some challenges with understanding the local Spanish dialect used among the Afro-Colombian people in the area. An advantage was that the investigator could write down his observations and interview guides in Norwegian, so that the surrounding people were not affected by the writing, nor did they understand what he was writing down during observation sessions or interviews. In terms of accuracy, it is worth mentioning that there can have occurred errors, for example in the phase of transcription of interviews or while translating from Norwegian to English, Spanish to English, or from Spanish to Norwegian. All these languages have been used during the master's thesis project.

Another issue that may have affected the data collection is that the investigator was sometimes mistaken for a SC or NRC employee. It was necessary in some places to wear a vest from SC for security reasons, which added to this misconception. As a result, it is possible that some informants were reluctant to answer the questions, or that they presented more positive results since they believed that the researcher worked for one of the two NNGOs, which serve as financial sources for many of the partners. During the interviews, it was highlighted several times that the researcher was not working for neither of the NGOs. In general the researcher got the impression that foreigner usually were identified with NGOs in Tumaco. Another experience with the interviews and the subjects was that it had to be clarified several times that when one spoke of e.g. sustainability, it was referring to the alliance, and not to other issues.

There were some challenges related to the physical movement of the researcher in Tumaco, with the result that some potential primary sources could not be accessed. This was particularly the case of the areas outside the urban centre. Although the latter is not considered a safe area, it was safer than the rural areas surrounding Tumaco. The investigator noticed that people around him were somewhat following his movements, and people asked questions about his purposes in the area. Therefore, it was crucial that the researcher had a clear explication for his stay in the city, namely that of a student investigating on education in the area. For security reasons, the investigator never mentioned to strangers where he was residing, neither which organisations he was working with. To access Tumaco, it was necessary to arrive by plane. When leaving, the researcher was transported in a NRC car, since the public bus route between Tumaco and Pasto, the capital of Nariño, is not considered safe since it passes through guerrilla areas and coca crops. The road is frequently being blocked by indigenous groups protesting, and also there are numerous attacks on road and transport vehicles by the FARC.

Although there were challenges with physical movement in Tumaco, NRC and SCiC were helpful in gathering several informants both from the IEs, RECOMPAS and SET in their local office in Tumaco. This somewhat negatively affects the research, while paradoxically also strengthening it considering that the researcher managed to get in touch with informants that normally would have difficult to communicate with. During the timespan of the field work, the city of Tumaco was affected by several bombings, some on public roads and even one that detonated right next to a school building. Apart from this, there were also local teachers on strike, since the government planned to install new criteria for the teachers which would cause that large amounts of teachers were to be discharged.

Since the initiation, and during the entire field work, the investigator's strategy was always to interfere as little as possible in the daily work of the two NNGOs. They worked with a tight schedule and it was often difficult to agree on times for interviews and similar. Frequently the interviews had to be postponed. The researcher also offered to help the NGOs with different practical and theoretical tasks when possible.

Summary

This chapter has presented the selected method for the research project. It has given a thorough presentation of the design process of the investigation, its study units and the necessary field work conducted in Colombia in 2013. This was followed by a discussion on how the data is to be collected while at the same time considering the validity and reliability of the research, as well as keeping ethical reflections and discussions around the scope of the study in mind. Finally, the chapter closes with a discussion around limitations of data collection and challenges that interfered in the completion of the field study.

3 EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

This chapter discusses the role of civil society and partnerships towards education in the South, with special focus on geographical areas facing high levels of armed conflict and state abandonment. Some central concepts concerning the former mentioned topics will also be briefly identified and discussed, placing the study in a larger context.

3.1.1 State of the art on NGO Partnerships

There exists previous research reports on education for development and the involvement of NGOs from a theoretical viewpoint, see for example Miller-Grandvaux, Welmond, & Wolf (2002) for a study on how NGOs co-operate with the government on basic education within some selected African countries. Terje Tvedt (1998, 2002) focuses on the role of NGOs within development assistance, and perceives the NGOs as professional extensions of the state, weakening the understanding of them being voluntary-based. A central researcher on the study of NGOs and partnerships is Alan Fowler (1991, 1997, 2000a, 2000b), but there are also other contributors, such as Lister (2000) and Postma (1994). However, much of the NGO partnership literature focuses on the relationships between the northern donors or NGOs, and recipient NGOs in the South, with emphasis on discourse of equality and the sharing of decision making, which is a central focus of this master's thesis.

Potter et al. (2008) and Chant & McIlwaine (2009) give us some solid introductions to development in the South and how different institutions interact in the development scheme, ranging from states and international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to civil society organisations. More specifically on education, we find research on the South from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2011). For research related to education in conflict areas one may look to UNHCR (Crisp et al., 2001) and the work of the International Network of Education in Emergencies (INEE), which is an upcoming organisation working together with the UN and NGOs to enhance Education in Emergencies (EiE).

3.2 Development

In this paper, for demarcation measures in terms of world division, it was chosen to use the Brandt-terms «South» and the «North» respectively, considering the terms to be slightly less subjective than e.g. «less-developed» and «industrialised» or «Third World» regions or countries. The term South is used to depict the countries receiving humanitarian and development assistance mainly in the geographical south, while the term North describes the relatively wealthy nation states donating aid, according to Fowler (1997, 2000a).

In terms of development assistance there has been a shift during the last five decades, from a focus on supporting state apparatus in developing nations to supporting the civil society. In other words, there has been a shift from a macro to a micro focus on to where aid support should be directed. From the 1960s and onwards, aid donors realised that support to states in the South did not accomplish to eradicate social and political problems. As a response, greater emphasis was put on assisting the civil society through supporting low-income groups and grassroots movements, rather than to co-operate directly with political elites (Stern & Öjendal, 2010). This has relevance for the funding of development projects in the South and thus for our study on education, which basically focuses on the role of the civil society in the struggle for education provision.

3.2.1 Understanding Development

The term development is a debated one, where its significance may differ substantially depending on context. There is a tendency towards development being measured exclusively in economic terms, such as annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP), or Gross National Product (GNP) growth rate in a given country or region. “Development means different things to different people in different places, and even then, there is rarely agreement” (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009, p. 6). A popular understanding of development is broad access to nourishment, shelter, education, health care and employment. One could say that development deals with societal and individual change, where the outcomes are meant to be positive. In this sense, one could discuss what can be considered a negative or a positive outcome, depending on who is to be consulted on the matter. It can also be argued that development is seen as a structural change that depicts a process where a country goes from being underdeveloped to be developed, the latter presupposing a completed process of nationwide

industrialisation. It is also claimed that the term development, and the measures by which it is defined, is a dominant discourse of Western modernity (Sumner & Tribe, 2008).

Instead of asserting that development leads to positive and/or negative results, one can say that the term refers to change, either for the better or the worse (Potter et al., 2008). In this paper it is chosen to use the term for depicting societal and individual change, with positive outcomes for the beneficiaries involved. For a longer discussion on the topic and its various interpretations, see (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009; Potter et al., 2008; Sen, 2000; Sumner & Tribe, 2008).

3.2.2 Human development

For some authors, the emphasis is on human development. Instead of measuring development in economic terms such as annual GDP growth per year, some are leaning towards a more human term. For Indian economist Amartya Sen, human development should be seen as the expansion of real liberties that individuals are enjoying (Sen, 2000, p. 19). Sen stresses the importance of each person's *agency*, meaning the possibility each individual has to act as a human being, being able to make their own decisions and participate actively in society, instead of being instructed by other entities. According to Sen, this liberty can be attained, amongst others, through the means of education (Sen, 2000, p. 16). In this case, development is understood as a human aspect, where economic growth only forms a part of the matter. Economic growth alone does not guarantee an increased integration of a country's citizens.

To achieve the objectives of development and liberty, Sen has developed a capability approach, which has the capacities of the human being to act freely as a point of departure. He defines this approach as "a person's ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being; [it] represents the alternative combinations of things a person is able to do or be" Sen in (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007, p. 2). In other words, Sen talks about living a meaningful life as defined by the values and virtues each individual may possess. The main point here is that the term development often is loosely applied, leaving much room for discussion on whether a process actually can be defined as development.

3.2.3 Measuring Development

There are, and have been, several ways to measure development, and it has been common to measure GDP or GNP per capita as a way of classification. Today, one way of doing this is through the use of the Human Development Index (HDI), where several factors such as life expectancy, access to education and level of income are used to calculate figures for human development (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009). The HDI was created by Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq and the mentioned economist Sen, and is adopted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The question of measurement is central to NGO work since these organisations frequently have to report on their progress and results to donors. There is also an essential difference between the short and long term results of NGO projects. Many times, the NGOs only have limited time to initiate and implement their projects due to time restraints put upon them, often by their donors. Typically, due to several reasons, NGOs have to change their geographical area of operations after one or several years, making it difficult to accomplish sustainability when it comes to the further success of the projects in one given area. Considering that it can be difficult to measure education, it is even more challenging to measure the results of NGOs working with education compared to other development work in other fields such as infrastructure, health or nourishment. The issue of measurement is central for this study due to its focus on project results.

3.3 Education for Development

Here we argue why education is important in a development context. For many stakeholders, education is seen as a way to achieve social change. We have already seen that Sen sees education as a prerequisite for human development. In a Latin American focus, the Brazilian sociologist Paulo Freire advocates for education as a tool for empowerment with his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, where he sees education on a community level as crucial for raised self-awareness for the poor people, making them aware of their situation and giving them the possibility to alter it. In this case, he sees the adaptation of education to deal with local community-based conditions as the solution, solving challenges by local means (Franko, 2007). Freire's way of thinking has inspired many NGOs to work on a community level directly with education, an opinion that is reflected in our case study.

In an economical perspective based on studies on former and present low-income countries, it is argued that education is linked to growth in productivity and in a country's GDP. On the other side, referring to a study on Brazilian society by the United Nation's Children Fund (UNICEF), there is a link between schooling and decreasing fertility rates. Notwithstanding, many agree on the argument that education is a central part of the development scheme, considering it as a prerequisite for other development goals such as sustainable development, the empowerment of women, the construction of socially cohesive societies, the eradication of poverty and the promotion of human rights (Hopper, 2012).

3.3.1 Education as a Right and a Strategy

Apart from being a strategy within development, primary or basic education is identified as a common good, and is usually rooted as a mandatory activity. Additionally, "(...) [P]rimary education is regarded as a fundamental human right by the UN" (Hopper, 2012, 86). The right to education is also implemented in the MDG number two, which receives attention since the deadline is closing in. Therefore, new subsequent development goals are being discussed for the following years post to 2015. UNESCO has a similar campaign where, under the name of the Education for All (EFA) World declaration from Jomtien of 1990 (updated in Dakar in 2000), they have elaborated six goals related to education, which are also expected to be met by the year of 2015. In short, the EFA approach searches to attain a global commitment to the provision of not only basic education for all children, youth and adults, but also to guarantee a quality education (UNESCO, 2014). Here it can be argued that the term "quality" is highly ambiguous, leaving it up to each stakeholder to define how quality is understood. These global initiatives serve as an explanation of why NGOs support education in their field work.

3.3.2 Education in the South

There is a current discussion in the education field about which actors are responsible or best suited for the delivery of quality education to children and youth in the South. Naturally, one assumes that it is the state itself that in the end is responsible for the provision of basic education to its citizens, presupposing that there is a functioning state apparatus in the first place. In many cases, especially countries and regions with low income, varying levels of armed conflict and/or struck by natural disasters, education facilities are scarce and there is a

lack of available expertise. This is where other non-public actors come in, as in the case of Colombia.

According to Hopper (2012), although pupils are attending school this does not necessarily mean that they receive quality education, highlighting the need to measure the quality and results of education. There are some standards for measurement, such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), which compares and evaluates education progress in several countries, among them Colombia, is used widely to rank a country according to its scores. This can be problematic due to the fact that the quality of education each school is able to deliver is heavily affected by its surroundings and monetary and human resources. PISA standards can be criticised for high levels of generalisation, keeping out local divergence and different ways of achievement measurement, something which also is reflected in this case study.

Another problem regarding the measurement of outcomes of education is the quality of learning and the actual results of spending time in the classroom. Hopper states that “the EFA Global Monitoring Report argued (...) that too many children “were receiving an education of such poor quality that they leave school without basic literacy and numeracy skills” (2012, p. 90). The consequence of low quality education is that children and their parents are more reluctant to school attendance, giving priority to other activities such as domestic chores or paid labour to provide the family with economical resources. This brings extra challenges to school enrolment, as reflected in the case study.

3.3.3 Education in Emergencies

In recent years, the focus on education has become more prevalent, and not only in a development context. When tackling the challenge of access to education, several sources state that armed conflict is a major obstacle to school enrolment and access to education. According to Hopper (2012), about 33% of 72 million out-of-school children in the world live in as few as 20 conflict-affected countries. Further on, NRC and Norad claim that half of the world’s 57 million out-of-school children live in areas affected by war and conflict (Norad, 2011; NRC, 2013a). Due to the increase in organised violence in the second half of the 20th Century, EiE was founded in the 1990s as a humanitarian response to major armed conflicts such as the Gulf War and the genocide in Rwanda (Kagawa, 2005).

From this, several organisations have defined education as a humanitarian strategy, where the motto “education cannot wait” refers to the issue of armed conflicts sometimes lasting for years or decades, with no clear end in sight. Education for refugees and IDPs is a central subject in this matter, which is seen to be also an important factor to contribute to giving security, assistance, and generally supporting people in times of emergency and traumatisation, giving them a chance to participate in daily activities, normalising their lives to a certain degree (INEE, 2014). International humanitarian and development organisations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children, the World Bank, NRC and Plan International have taken interest in the promotion and delivery of EiE programmes. Several of the organisations have produced research and handbooks for EiE planning and school reconstruction, but the sector is in need of thorough academic research on its interference and effects. On one hand, EiE has a major focus on refugees in refugee camps, giving educational assistance to children, youth and adults who have fled their country. On the other hand, the approach is also working towards IDPs, something that also will be the focus of the study.

The approach of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) depicts:

“Education in emergencies comprises learning opportunities for all ages. It encompasses early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocational, higher and adult education. In emergency situations through to recovery, quality education provides physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection that can sustain and save lives” (INEE, 2012, p. 2).

It can be debated what identifies an emergency or EiE can have different definitions according to context, but it is generally accepted that emergency education programmes are applied to situations where national and community education systems are lacking due to complex situations of armed conflict or natural disasters (Kagawa, 2005). Our case study is a research on an education approach that combines education as humanitarian assistance as well as a development approach.

3.4 The Civil Society

There is a wide discussion on the definition of civil society and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Notwithstanding, according to Chant and McIlwaine (2009, p. 295), there is a certain agreement on that it refers to a sphere between the state and the individual, usually associated with the voluntary sector, although it also can refer to churches and religious societies, and labour unions. Civil society is meant to undertake the role of challenging the state, especially

those controlled by authoritarian regimes. When speaking of civil society, one often refers to NGOs, although the term also can refer to community-based organisations (CBOs) and other entities. The civil society can also refer to global civil society, which includes international activism and transnational organising (Chant & McIlwaine, 2009).

3.4.1 The NGO Sector

The term NGO can have several connotations. Often the term refers to the volunteer sector, usually working in one or another way with aid on a local, national or international level. Chant and McIlwaine (2009, p. 295) see NGOs as “non-state, non-market organisations that are autonomous, non-profit-making and focused on different levels of development assistance”. NGOs can have a great number of purposes, ranging from advocacy groups to operating NGOs, the latter working directly with e.g. the development of an adequate sewage system in a given community, or working towards the protection of refugees. Their focus varies from working on a local scale to cover several countries. Potter et al. (2008) state that the main characteristics of an NGO is that they are not governmental, but private entities that work with a non-profit orientation.

According to Tvedt, the definitions of an NGO, non-profit or private voluntary organisations are not agreed upon in a transnational or transhistorical matter. This can be explained with the broad field of different types of organisations working in different development sectors. Further on, he argues in favour of using the term “NGO” “as a common denominator for all organizations within the aid channel that are institutionally separated from the state apparatus and are non-profit-distributing” (Tvedt, 1998, p. 12). The NGO sector is complex, consisting of different actors which have different roles according to their position. For instance, an NGO can serve both as a donor and a receiver of aid support: an international NGO (INGO) can serve as a receiver of state funds, but also serve as a donor for national or local NGOs in the operating country.

Our case concerns local NGOs and CBOs. According to Chant and McIlwaine (2009, p. 296), the CBOs, similar to Grassroots Organisations (GROs) are somewhat different to NGOs, since they are working on a community-based level, and are often active within specific issues. When the set goals are met, they tend to cease to exist. Therefore they have an ephemeral character, distinguishing them from the NGOs, who tend to be staffed by professionals and are of a more permanent nature. Throughout the paper we use the term

NGO to refer to non-profit development organisations working within the aid field, with focus on education. The southern partners are referred to as NGOs (trained organisations with different levels of technical knowledge) and CBOs (in general less skilled).

3.4.2 The Role of NGOs in Education

Although many NGOs work with education, this is normally only one of several of their development approaches. Usually, the focus is also on issues such as human rights, shelter, protection, nourishment, while there also are NGOs working more specifically with refugees and internal displaced persons (IDPs), such as UNHCR, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and NRC.

From a juridical perspective, education is the responsibility of the state. Today, apart from the multitude of bilateral and NGO support that the South experiences, international organisations such as the UN, the IMF and the World Bank are actively outlining the development agenda, and are sometimes taking the role of the state in the provision of education. Following the thoughts of Potter et al, in many developing countries the state was mainly in charge of the design and implementation of development strategies in the period after WW2 (2008). Nowadays, in the cases where the states are failing to fulfil the task of providing quality education to its citizens, there can be seen a tendency where the NGOs replace government responsibilities because of a belief of greater efficiency and greater ability of funding. Besides; the NGOs take benefit in the North's preoccupation towards countries in the South and their perceived need for external assistance (Potter et al., 2008) and (Miller-Grandvaux et al., 2002). Or simply, the NGOs take on work tasks not undertaken, or poorly undertaken by the state itself, offering specialised technical assistance within their fields of expertise.

The focus on education as a strategy within the development scheme hinges on national and international trends, and there are usually several ongoing debates on what should be prioritised within development aid. As an example, in recent years the Norwegian government, which is an important aid donor, has actively committed itself to education for development and EiE in their aid strategy. According to Norad (2014a), in the state budget for 2014 education aid to NGOs consist of 400 million Norwegian kroners, which makes about 30% of a total budget of 1,4 billion kroners. This allocation coincides with the Norwegian government's education strategy for southern countries. In the state budget for 2015 the Norwegian government proposes to support education for development with an additional 500

million kroners, where education for children in conflict areas is being given priority (Aftenposten, 2014). This illustrates the priority that education is being given in the North.

Equally, the Canadian government promotes education and EiE. An example is the funding of education in south-western Colombia, a project that is the aim of study in this paper. Moreover, CIDA has put universal basic education as a primordial pillar in their development assistance programme (CIDA, 2011).

3.4.3 Benefits and Drawbacks with NGOs Working with Education

In many countries affected by conflict or in a post-conflict situation, NGOs are the ones who cover the education needs of refugees, IDPs and other marginalised groups. With marginalisation we understand “the exclusion of certain populations from the processes of decision-making that affect their well-being and prospects; (...)” (Fowler, 1997, p. 5). The NGO presence can be explained by weak governments which do not have the resources or priorities to offer basic education to all its school-aged population. The predominant explanation for the establishment of all types of NGOs alleges that these organisations “emerge as an institutional response to market or state failures” (Tvedt, 1998, p. 41).

According to Fowler, NGOs will take on an increasing role within global development. For him, “governments are seen to be inefficient and (often) corrupt, and commercial enterprise too self-serving and concerned with short-term gain to provide hope for sustainable livelihoods for the world’s population” (1991, p. 16). The advantage of NGOs is that they can focus more specifically on their tasks, using specially trained and experienced people in their different areas of work.

A positive claim about the NGOs is that they can grant expertise within specific areas such as education, and they bring experiences from similar work from other places in the world. Nevertheless, it can also be claimed that the NGOs fail to adapt to new areas of interference since developed models and strategies can work well in one area, but their rate of success may decrease in other areas due to changing local contexts.

There is a common understanding that NGOs tend to have a strictly voluntary approach. Today, this is altering towards an understanding of the sector being more specialised, where many of the people working for INGOs are receiving salaries, and it can be said that these

entities tend to be perceived as independent companies. As for Norway, considering that many NGOs primarily receive government funding, such as in the cases of NRC, the Norwegian People's Aid and the Norwegian Church Aid, Tvedt argues that this type of entities are better understood as more or less integrated elements of the state institution. Considering that NGOs in many cases have become dependent of government funds, they have adapted to a donor states' requirements regarding how their aid work is elaborated and how they design their aid profile (1998). Another important issue is the legitimacy of NGO work. The case study will discuss to what degree NGOs are welcomed to intervene in educational planning and how they gain access and create trust.

3.4.4 The role of Education within Development Assistance and Humanitarian Response

When implementing strategies such as the MDGs and EFA, the question of who is responsible for the funding of these remains unanswered. A calculation that has been made states that, to achieve EFA, there is need for "additional financial support by countries and increased development assistance and debt relief for education by bilateral and multilateral donors, estimated to cost in the order of US\$8 billion a year" (Hopper, 2012, p. 90). However, now that we have reached the year 2015, we see that the achievement to reach goal number two is almost fulfilled, if the figures are correct, with over 90% of children being enrolled in basic education worldwide (UN, 2014b). From this, it is discussed to which category education belongs, if it is "long-term" development aid or "short-term" humanitarian assistance, generalising the issues. According to Slim, this tendency categorises that humanitarian work is all about saving lives, while development work is more political than humanitarian assistance. On the contrary, Slim sees both approaches as similar because they both are concerned with saving lives, they can be both short- or long-term, and both are potentially political due to their concern with the use or abuse of power in human relations. One the subject of human rights, the two approaches have found their common ground (Slim, 2000).

3.5 Co-ordination and Co-operation in Development

Much of the existing literature on partnerships focuses on relationships between northern and southern NGOs, e.g. Lister (2000), Postma (1994), and Fowler (1991, 1997, 2000a, 2000b).

This literature depicts the partnerships in a development context, and is therefore relevant for the case study. The emphasis is on the partnership as a balanced relationship, where all partners are to have equal positions regarding decision-making and inclusion in development project design and implementation.

3.5.1 Towards a Definition of Partnership

Taking into consideration the growing numbers of NGOs, the development sector has set partnership as a guiding strategy to where NGOs in the North and South formerly expressed different levels of solidarity, and where the aim was to achieve social change in the recipient society. Apart from this, throughout the 1980s the development sector experienced a privatisation of development, something that increased official aid to NGOs (Fowler, 1991, 2000b).

Although there are incentives among several organisations for an increased use of partnerships, the concept itself tends to have a broad use and moreover often little specification within co-operation for development and humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, a partnership is often understood as containing the following aspects: Focus on transparency, legitimacy, equality and reciprocal information exchange. In the search of a clearer definition, it is chosen to use the partnership framework developed by Alan Fowler, a researcher on development dedicated to the study of NGOs and partnerships in a development context. On a basic level, one can think of partnership as a form of co-operation between development organisations, where they share a mutual outcome for their work. This then implicates that the entities involved share some basic ideologies and strategies to accomplish common results and goals. According to Fowler, a partnership can encompass varying degrees of co-operation, as seen in the figure below.

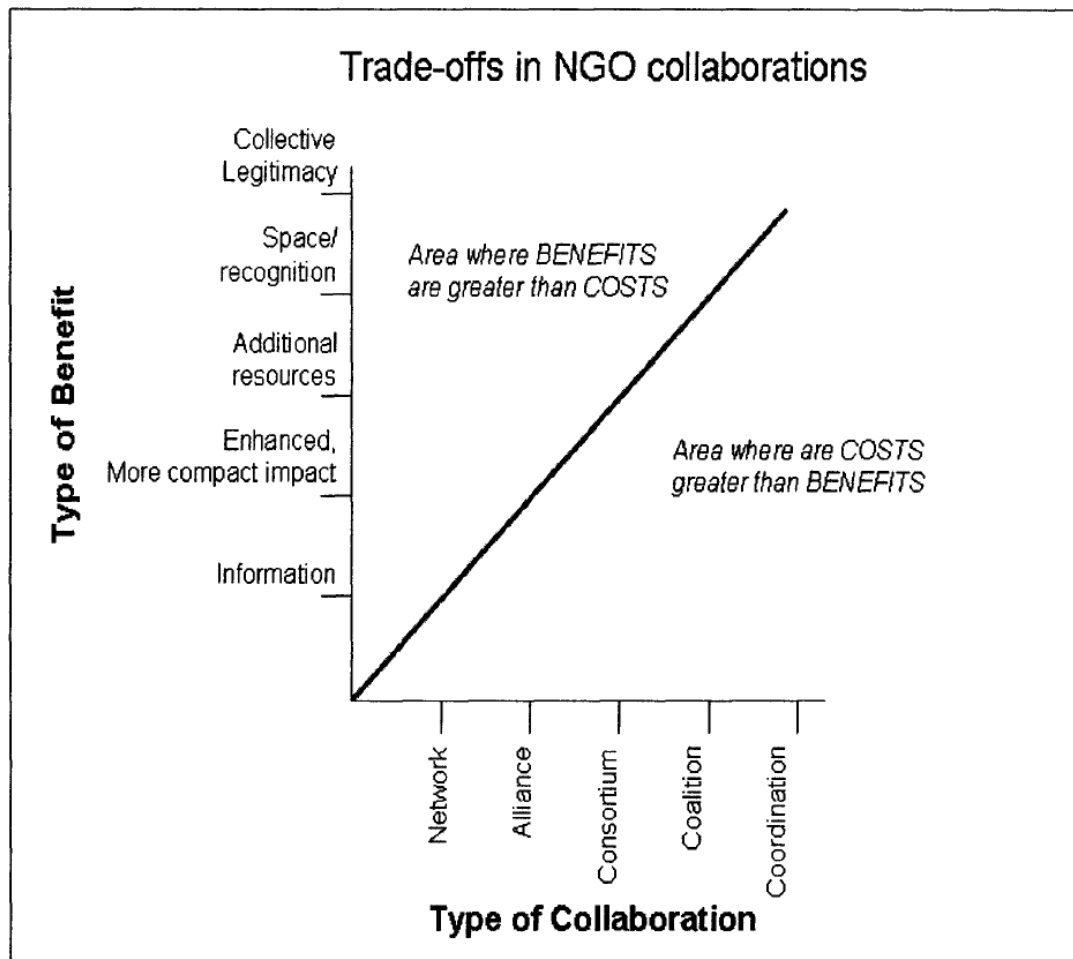


Figure I: Trade-offs in NGDO collaboration by Fowler

Source: (Fowler, 1997, p. 112)

Fowler uses network theory to categorise the concept of partnership in five taxonomies, ranging from the lowest to the highest level of partnership between NGOs, where the type of collaboration affects the level of benefit. Below we have a summary on the different levels of collaboration:

1. Network	<u>Characteristics:</u> loosest form of collaboration; primarily information exchange; dissimilar members; little commitment; unequal relationship; legitimisation of status; gaining profile;
2. Alliance	<u>Characteristics:</u> synchronisation of efforts and resources; no common identity; individual NGDO autonomy is only minimally constrained in terms of agreeing on mutuality within existing goals, timing and methods
3. Consortium and 4. coalitions	<u>Characteristics:</u> production of an organisational entity which is constituted by and is the legal responsibility of the founding NGDOs but does not have authority over them. In consortia, the principle benefits are increased access to resources which might otherwise not be available. In coalitions, the principal benefits are increased presence, profile and leverage. Both demand acceptance of mutual accountability due to a joint liability for performance. Problems with consortia: uneven governance affecting effectiveness.
5. Coordination	<u>Characteristics:</u> Bodies that usually operate along national lines; Bring strong constraints on autonomy; typically includes codes of conduct for access to membership; bodies can help rebuild and retain public confidence in NGDO integrity by showing transparency and a general order; can provide international links and voice positions on behalf of members

Table II: Fowler's classification of different levels of NGO collaboration

Source: An elaboration based on Fowler (1997, pp. 112-118)

Regarding the different levels of partnership outlined above, in this study the understanding of partnership refers to a relationship that exceeds basic levels of networking and alliances. Rather, it was chosen to relate to higher levels of co-operation, referring to the levels 3, 4 and 5 outlined in Figure I.

3.5.2 Addressing Partnership

Working with the government and public institutions

Apart from NGO collaborating with each other, a partnership can also comprise relations between NGOs and governmental institutions. The inclusion of the government can enlarge formal legal, political and administrative conditions for the NGDO if a correct approach is chosen. The level of success working with governments depends in many ways on the ideology of the regime in power. It should not be underestimated that governments tend to be content and supportive when NGDOs substitute state services with their own funds. Additionally, this type of co-operation can increase advocacy results, and also lead to reforms

in public policies. On the other side this type of co-operation can also create discomfort when NGOs challenge the states through the empowerment of local communities, which may confront the state with a demand of higher effectiveness. Therefore, the approaches must be carefully planned, always bearing in mind the national context (Fowler, 1997, pp. 120-125).

Advantages

In addition to the previous mentioned arguments that partnership can increase effectiveness and sustainability within development projects, there are also other arguments for advocating towards increased co-ordination and co-operation between NGOs. Edwards and Gaventa (2001) allege that “[i]t is seen that partnerships and a broader dialogue between all groups [public, private and civic sectors] will deliver better rates of success at less political cost” (Potter et al., 2008, p. 317). A partnership is thus seen as a strategy for an increased embodiment of development work.

According to Chant & McIlwaine (2009, p. 302), in the early stages of NGO work in the second half of the 20th century, the focus was on direct delivery of relief and welfare services. Since then the NGO sector has experienced a generational shift, where the focus has shifted towards sustainable development and involvement in policy formulation and advocacy for better outcomes of NGO projects. According to the latter mentioned authors, one can see a tendency where NGOs are more focused on capacity-building and partnership between northern and southern NGOs, based on a belief that NGOs standing alone tend to be perceived as being too small and too limited, also in time, to have a real impact on their area of interference.

Challenges

The latter issue also contributes to the critique of NGO work, where projects are criticised for their short duration, and thus failing to achieve profound and long-lasting positive effects. This challenge can also be linked to shifts in donor interests. Donors may decide to change the area of intervention for different reasons, leaving the recipient NGO without financial resources, frequently causing the termination of their development project.

Another fundamental critique that partnerships between northern and southern NGOs have received is that the concept is based on “a Northern-imposed idea which is deeply tied-up

with the need for Northern aid agencies and NGOs to establish a legitimacy for operations in the South and demonstrate their “added value” in the development process (Lister, 2000, p. 229). The question that then arises is if the involved partners enjoy the same amount of advantages with the partnership.

One can also question the necessity for co-ordination. However, according to Fowler, there are two fundamental reasons for why various levels of co-ordination should be encouraged: “1. To minimise duplication and wastage through exchange of information and/or resources; 2. To provide a mandated forum through which the collective consensus of NGDOs can be expressed to others, usually national governments, donors and UN agencies” (1997, p. 117).

In terms of partnership and different levels of co-operation, Fowler (2000b, p. 5) claims that not all relationships are partnerships, but rather, as seen in the elaboration on different levels of partnerships:

[p]artnerships are one type of relationship. The distinctive feature of a partnership is that it involves sharing, with a sense of mutuality and equality of the parties involved. In other words, both sides of the partnership equation are of equal value – although not necessarily of the same content” (1991, p. 12).

From the above it is clear that enough trust and high levels of transparency between the partners is required if the partnership is to function well. This brings us to the issue of rhetoric and reality within partnerships.

Rhetoric vs. Reality and Equality on Partnership between NGOs

It is recognised that there is a considerable distance between the rhetoric and reality of partnerships between NGOs. The problem arises when attempting to establish authentic partnerships, where the issue of the control of money affects the idea of equality amongst the partners, although the partners work to implement transparency and mutuality as favourable conditions. From this, the problem of inequality arises, where one NGO, typically the northern one, has the role of the donor towards the southern recipient NGO. As a consequence that arises is then that the NNGO has asymmetrical power over its southern counterpart, where the donor can do to the recipient what the latter cannot do to the former (Lister, 2000, p. 229). Apart from this, although there is a balance in resources, one cannot talk about partnership if there are disparities in areas such as the capacity to “be yourself” and to act autonomously (Fowler, 1997, pp. 110-111).

Social Capital in Partnerships

Dichter (1989, cited in Lister, 2000, p. 229) claims that, for a partnership to be effective and successful, a strong personal relationship between the partners involved is often needed. Brown links this to *social capital*. By this he means that “the stronger the personal relationship, the higher the levels of social capital available for co-operative problem-solving and the more easily gaps created by different levels of power and knowledge can be bridged” (Brown 1996, cited in Lister, 2000, p. 229). Following this argument, partnerships depend on certain levels of social capital, where personal relationships are crucial for a well-functioning partnership, but vulnerable to changes in leadership and other staff members. This also highlights the time-perspective, considering that it is a time-consuming approach to build confidence and trust between the involved partners.

3.5.3 Partnerships for Education

The challenges with partnerships are also relevant for education for development. Rognerud (2005) claims that in the development field, a central challenge for improved co-ordination is the lack of funding. According to the same author, this is especially the challenge for EiE, due to vague time frames and common disagreement between agencies when it comes to identifying the operations and in which spectre it would be placed of the development or the humanitarian approach. In terms of education for development, there are several networks and clusters active in the south, meaning that there are low levels of partnership in the light of Fowler’s theory.

A general critique to the partnership approach within education for development is the wording itself. *Partnership*, *co-ordination* and *co-operation* give all positive connotations, which leads to the terms to be used in a general way to attain for example funding, restructuring the notion of solidarity and agreements on common goals. Nor the less, in the field of emergency education and reconstruction, Larry Minear claims that “co-ordination is easier to advocate than to achieve” (quoted in Sommers, 2004, p. 26). This latter proclamation leads to the problem with a theoretical and a practical use of partnership.

Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies

Education for development can be co-ordinated in clusters which can consists of working groups and networks of development organisations that share common goals. In our case this is access to quality education and education in conflict areas. When it comes to EiE, we have already seen that INEE is a central network, consisting of several UN bodies, INGOs, Governmental Development Agencies and Ministries of Education. The network's main activity is to promote EiE through policy influence, advocacy work and resource mobilisation, and information management. INEE is also responsible for the elaboration of handbooks and to disburse information related to EiE, and is in charge of the construction of a toolkit for Minimum Standards related to EiE (INEE, 2012).

Global Education Cluster

Another example of a cluster is the organisation led by UNICEF and Save the Children, which also is an open forum for coordination and collaboration on education in emergencies, comprising NGOs, UN agencies, academics and other partners interested in the issue. On a global level, the cluster also works towards other clusters on national levels (Global Education Cluster, 2013).

Inter-Agency Standing Committee

As a response towards strengthening humanitarian assistance, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) was founded in June 1992. Based on a UN General Assembly Resolution on the strengthening of humanitarian assistance, it was created as a forum for both UN and non-UN humanitarian partners as a mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian affairs. One of the goals of IASC is to maintain a relatively limited number of members in order to evade loss of functionality and focus (IASC, 2013). This committee is also active in the area in which the case study takes place.

3.5.4 Incorporation of the Partnership Model Amongst Development Actors

We will now look to how partnership as a concept is incorporated in the development sector. Apart from the mentioned partnership strategies, there are also other types of relationships between the different development actors:

1. Between and with NGOs, both international and national
2. Between and with UN bodies
3. Partnership with the state in donor or recipient country
4. Partnership with the civil society (partial overlapping with number 1)

Lister (2000, p. 236) claims that “[p]artnership as a concept dominates the social policy field and has been readily incorporated into NGO practice and rhetoric”. In the Norwegian context, a study on development co-operation done by Norwegian NGOs in South America shows a tendency where Norwegian NGOs co-operate on national and local levels with different partners, ranging from local NGOs to national umbrella organisations working with focus areas such as education, labour rights and environmental sustainability. The report criticised a lack of co-ordination between several Norwegian NGOs working within the same country (Braaten, Wiig, Lundeberg, & Haug, 2007).

In many cases, especially within the UN and NGO sectors, it is normal to differentiate between an implementing partner and a strategic partner in the partnership, as is seen in the case study. The implementing partner receives economical funding for the implementation of aid work, while the strategic partner has an active role within the decision making of the projects undertaken but does normally not receive any economical compensation.

For instance, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), has for several years been working with the strengthening of partnerships with the UN system, international organisations, national and international NGOs and government agencies, apart from working together with the private sector (UNHCR, 2007, 2012). The question that arises in light of the partnership model is then if this is a global development strategy mainly originating from the donor side or from the recipient side, an issue that could serve for another debate, but is not addressed in this study.

An example of project overlapping is the case of UNICEF and UNHCR, which work in the same geographical area with educational support to IDPs in Colombia, but without having a formal plan for co-ordination, leading to the problem of project overlapping, where the same works is done by two organisations (UNICEF, 2007).

In the aid sector, typically a NGO receives funding from a government, commercial companies or international organisations such as the UN or the World Bank. As a result, an NGO can choose to co-operate on different geographical levels on the implementation of their

aid projects, ranging from the international sphere to national and local levels, although a NGO is typically left alone with this task. Nevertheless, in the aid sector, an increased interest for partnership, co-ordination and co-operation is taking place, and it is not uncommon in donor policy that these issues are conditions for the funding of development aid or humanitarian assistance, seen as contributing to effective project implementation.

Norad has developed guidelines for NGOs seeking financial support, consisting of three main requirements: “they should 1) help build the capacity and competence of the partner, 2) add value to the partnership beyond channelling financial resources, and 3) strengthen the civil society of which the partner organisation is a part” (Norad, 2007, p. 60). The same report also states that the partnership strategy is a condition for continued financial support of a specific development project.

Summary

This chapter has presented how education is one of several factors that can lead to development, and further discussed how NGOs work in partnerships with other NGOs and public institutions as a strategy to increase the outcomes of development projects. The partnership strategy has increased its popularity proportionally with increasing numbers of NGOs working with development. This creates new challenges for co-ordination for NGOs as well as education authorities on different levels

4 ARMED CONFLICT AND EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA

Introduction

In this chapter the background will be given for the armed conflict in Colombia, which is essential for a better contextual understanding of the case study. Firstly, a brief introduction is given on the armed conflict and the involved actors, incorporating the conflict to a local level. Secondly, the humanitarian response and development assistance is depicted in the country, where a closer look is given on the Colombian government and especially the role of education within international co-operation. Finally, the focus shifts to the education situation in the country and in the chosen area where the case study was conducted.

4.1 An Introduction to the Armed Conflict

4.1.1 Antecedents to the Armed Conflict

During the 19th century, Colombia experienced not less than eight civil wars. During the 20th century, the country experienced frequent armed conflicts, often originating in political partisanship, where Conservatives and Liberals stood on each their side. Between 1946 and 1964, about 200.000 killings (or possibly 300.000 depending on the source) were reported during this time period (Skidmore, Smith, & Green, 2010). Throughout the 70s, 80s and 90s, the violence continued to exist, and these epochs also witnessed the introduction of new armed actors.

Since the 1940s, the country has had to deal with several armed groups, each of them with different targets, ranging from reigning the country to controlling strategic territory for economical earnings. These groups are central to the humanitarian situation, and hence the understanding of it, in the country.

4.1.2 The Guerrilla Groups

During the 1940s and 60s, Colombia witnessed the rise of left-oriented guerrilla groups, whose objective was to gain political power by the use of violence. In this category we have,

apart from several small, ephemeral coalitions, the *Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army* (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo – FARC-EP), the *National Liberation Army* (Ejército de Liberación Nacional – ELN), and the *Popular Liberation Army* (Ejército Popular de Liberación – EPL). Today, only ELN and FARC-EP are still active.

FARC-EP is the major actor, counting around 8000 members, and is currently negotiating with the Colombian government over a possible peace treaty, supported by the governments of Norway and Cuba. There are also ongoing conversations between ELN and the Colombian authorities on a possible negotiation (NRK, 2014a, 2014b). One of the main reasons for civic unrest in Colombia is the historical division between the elite and the peasants, a system the country inherited from the former Spanish rule (Skidmore et al., 2010). Another rightist guerrilla, the *19th of April Movement* (Movimiento 19 de Abril – M-19), also existed between 1970 and the 1990s, when it demobilised.

Main reasons for the formation of these armed groups was the lack of opportunities for political participation, the lack of a much needed agrarian reform to combat unequal distribution and little access to peasants for cultivation, and a general mistrust to governments due to a perceived failure to represent the Colombian people in a fair, democratic way. From the 1970s and onwards, the country faced a rise in drug production and drug trafficking. This illegal labour skyrocketed during the 1980s and 90s, where different drug cartels in several of the mayor cities fought to control the highly lucrative drug business (Skidmore et al., 2010).

4.1.3 The Paramilitary Units and Bacrim

Paramilitary groups

As a response to guerrilla operations, and as a means of securing different levels of legal and illegal businesses, right-wing oriented paramilitary groups were founded throughout the 1980s and onwards. According to Skidmore & Smith, they can be identified as “self-appointed vigilante units that unleashed violent attacks for a broad variety of motives – economic, political and personal” (Skidmore et al., 2010, p. 214).

In many ways the paramilitary groups worked with the protection of illegal production and distribution of different types of narcotics, mainly coca and cocaine-related. Related to this,

the AUC counted with the support from large numbers of rural land owners (Del Rio, 2010, p. 437; Nussio, 2011, p. 88; Romero, 2003). Later on, the paramilitary groups regrouped to form a national union in 1997 known as the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia – AUC) (Del Rio, 2010, p. 437). Between 2003 and 2006 around 30.000 AUC members demobilised, although it remains uncertain whether everyone actually completed the demobilisation process. Although officially demobilised, it is claimed that paramilitary groups regrouped or simply continued to exist, although this time in the name of neo-paramilitaries (Nussio, 2011, p. 89).

Neo-paramilitaries and Bacrim

The neo-paramilitaries are also known as emerging criminal groups – (bandas criminales emergentes – Bacrim). According to the Colombian newspaper *El Tiempo*, as of 2011, there were 5000 former paramilitary members that were not accounted for, and therefore it is presumed that they continue their activities known under the denominated Bacrim (El Tiempo, 2011). Within the Bacrim, there are several neo-paramilitary units, led by former AUC leaders, the main known as “Urabeños”, “Paisas”, “Rastrojos”, “Águilas negras” (Black Eagles), and “Ejército Revolucionario Popular Antisubversivo de Colombia” (Popular Revolutionary Anti-subversive Army of Colombia – ERPAC) (Nussio, 2011, p. 89). As of today it is unclear which of the former mentioned groups are still active, but either way there is still Bacrim-activity in the country, and thereby HHRR continue to be violated by these units.

4.1.4 The Public Forces

When we talk of the public forces we refer to the armed forces and the national police. The role of the state in the conflict is a very delicate issue, especially when it comes to the assertion that these forces have contributed and still are contributing, to the violation of HHRR. In other words, the public forces use their position to harm the civil population in different manners, regularly including the use of violence.

It is alleged that the public forces have worked together with different paramilitary units to achieve different types of results, often leading to the latter groups being used for “doing the dirty work” with massacres, threats and the displacement of large groups of people (Colombia Reports, 2013). According to the Information System on Aggressions against Human Rights

Defenders of Colombia (Sistema de Información sobre Agresiones contra Defensores de Derechos Humanos en Colombia, SIADDHH), between July and September of 2014, the state was involved in 2% of a total of 186 registered aggressions, while paramilitary groups counted for 74% of them (Sistema de Información sobre Agresiones contra Defensores de Derechos Humanos en Colombia, 2014). Another source states that during 2013, different paramilitary groups and the public forces were the main contributors to violating HHRR, where the paramilitaries are responsible for 587 cases, the police 385, the army 176 and FARC-EP were responsible for 146 cases (Colombia Reports, 2014).

Apart from fighting illegal armed groups with more or less political orientations, the role of the state in the armed conflict is to fight a war against drugs. The public forces are used to destroy coca crops, hinder production and shipping of drugs to other regions of the world. With this work, Colombia receives support from the United States, particularly from the 90s and onwards, where this co-operation based on military and counter intelligence support to fight drugs and terrorism, saw yet another revival of this support in the aftermath of the terrorist attack in the United States 11th of September, 2001 (Del Rio, 2010, pp. 446-448; Skidmore et al., 2010, p. 216).

To sum up, there are various actors from different sectors with their own motives involved in the conflict, all of them responsible for violating HHRR, causing massive displacements and affecting the civil population. As we will see, one of the consequences of the conflict is that children and youth are being deprived from access to education.

4.1.5 Armed Conflict in San Andres de Tumaco

In addition to be geographically and politically isolated, the Pacific Colombian coast is one of the most affected areas of armed conflict in the country, especially regarding the two ports situated in the pacific coastline; Buenaventura in the Valle del Cauca county (in Colombian Spanish, *departamento*), and Tumaco in the Nariño County, in South-West Colombia, close to the Ecuadorian border. In addition to the Caribbean ports, these ports are strategic and important for both importation and exportation of legal and illegal goods. Moreover, the Colombian government lists the departments of Nariño, Cauca and Chocó, all of them situated in the pacific coast, as one of the regions with the highest concentration of natural resources (APC-Colombia, 2012, p. 10).

The port of Tumaco, also known as *the pearl of the Pacific*, serves mainly for the exportation of crude oil and palm oil. The Pacific region and Caribbean coast are historically populated by persons of African descent (Barbary & Urrea, 2003). There are also several Indigenous groups residing there. About 29% of the nation's Indigenous population and 12% of the Afro-Colombian population lives in the counties of Cauca and Nariño. In fact, around 10% of the national population belongs to the following ethnic categories: Negro, Mulatto, Afro-Colombian, or Afro descendant (DANE, 2005b); yet others claim the correct number of Afro-Colombian in the country is 20% (El Espectador, 2014a). At the same time, together with Indigenous groups, they are the most affected by internal displacement as a consequence of armed conflict. On a national level, between 2012 and 2014, 26% of the displaced were Afro-Colombians (OCHA, 2014c). When it comes to Tumaco, 89% of its habitants are Afro-Colombian, while 5% are of different Indigenous backgrounds (Presidential Program for Human Rights and IHL, 2009, pp. 11-12).

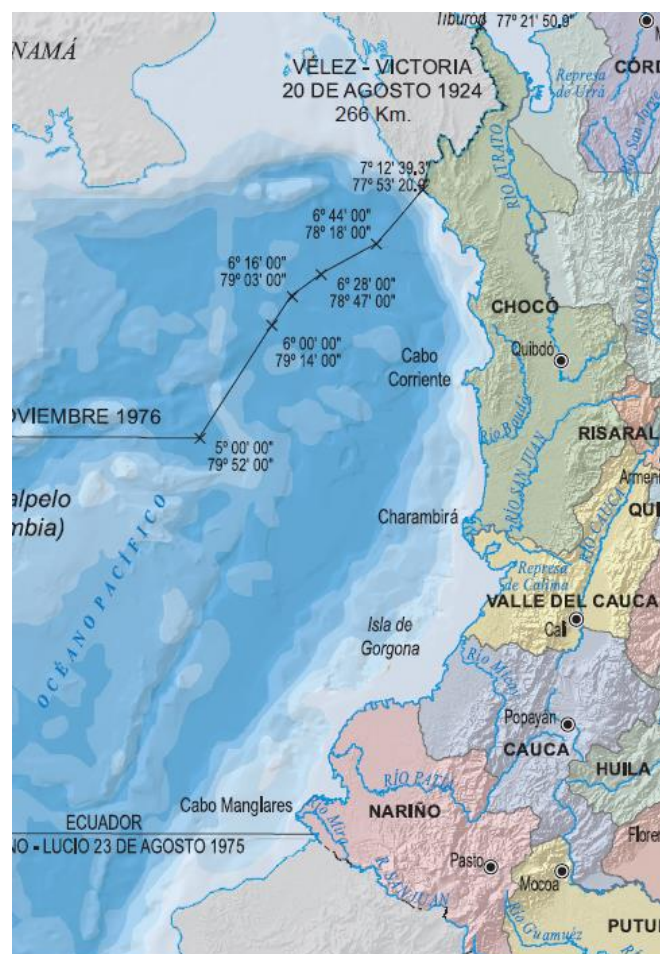


Figure II: Map of the Pacific region

Source: IGAC, 2007

For many years, the Pacific coast was excluded from the armed conflict. It was not until the decades of the 1980s that drug trafficking found its way to the Nariño coastline as a consequence of increased coca production and the strategic location close to the Ecuadorian border, although it did not affect the society in a direct matter. Only in the last decade of the 20th century, guerrilla groups entered the area, followed by the arrival of paramilitary units. Today the FARC-EP block Daniel Aldana group is active in Tumaco, as well as the paramilitary groups Los Rastrojos and Águilas Negras (Save the Children Colombia, 2012).

In an attempt to counteract the violent drug business, the authorities strengthened military presence in the area early in the 2000s. The objective was first and foremost manual eradication and fumigation of coca crops as well as to fight illegal armed groups involved in the drug sector. As a result, the violence escalated in the region, and is still present today (Presidential Program for Human Rights and IHL, 2009, pp. 6-8). Figures from Save the Children estimate that armed conflict, forced displacement, forced recruitment, and the massacre of civilians in Tumaco have affected rural areas particularly hard. The municipality of Tumaco is primarily rural, with many people living outside the city's borders (Save the Children Colombia, 2012, p. 9).



Figure III: Photo of the city of Tumaco, Nariño County, by author

4.2 The Humanitarian context in Colombia

Colombia was placed on the international agenda especially after the first peace attempts with FARC in the late 1990s. Since then, more and more focus has been placed on the South American country with issues related to HHRR and internal displacement. Up to this date, Colombia is still struggling with the lack of social land distribution. It is claimed that such a reform would serve the peasants who struggle to make a living by giving them more opportunities to sustain themselves. However, a national elite consisting of few but powerful families, owns the majority of the cultivable soil and continues to deny peasants this possibility.

Although the Colombian government is reluctant to accept the large numbers of IDPs published by other organisations, there has been a gradual shift from denying that the problem even existed to acknowledging that there are around 3,6 million IDPs since counting began in 2000 (IDMC, 2014a). Other non-governmental sources estimate figures of between 5,2 and 5,7 million IDPs in Colombia, with another 500.000 Colombian refugees residing in other countries, mainly in the neighbouring republics of Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama (IDMC, 2014b; OCHA, 2014b). As of 2014, only Syria has a higher number of IDPs. According to OCHA, there were another 590.645 victims of natural disasters in the South American country in 2013 (OCHA, 2014b). Further on, OCHA states that 305.624 persons were displaced between November 2012 and June 2014.

It is estimated that 64% of the IDPs are aged under 24 (Norad, 2013). UNICEF reports that 50% of the IDPs is aged under 18 (2011, p. 8). These numbers show that children and youth are severely affected by the conflict, thereby facing difficulties related to their education possibilities. In addition to the armed conflict and displacement, poverty forms a major part of the problem, where 46% of the population lived below the national poverty line in 2010 (ECLAC, 2011).

4.2.1 The Case of Tumaco

Colombia is politically divided in 32 departments and a Capital District. The departments have a certain degree of autonomy; each of them has its own governor, and are further divided in municipalities. Tumaco is witnessing violent confrontations between FARC, Bacrim, and the public forces. At the same time, it is also one of the poorest areas in the country. It has not

been possible to acquire accurate official numbers on poverty in Tumaco, but the numbers are high and much above the national average. Save the Children reports that 64% of the population in Tumaco live below the national poverty line, while 24% live with extreme poverty (Save the Children Colombia, 2012, p. 3). According to the Colombian news magazine *Semana* in 2012, around 70% of the Tumaqueños (people from Tumaco) were unemployed, and there were 30 murders each month (Semana, 2012). The murder rate is four times higher than the national average, and since 2008 Tumaco ranks first on a national level when it comes to growing of coca and cocaine production (Save the Children Colombia, 2012, pp. 12-13).

The inhabitants of Tumaco witness explosions, shooting, robbery and blackmailing, as well as other HHRR violations such as sexual violence, disappearances, torture, kidnapping, forced recruitment (also of children), installation of antipersonnel mines, and threats towards community leaders on a daily base (Human Rights Watch, 2014). According to official sources, approximately 60.000 IDPs have fled the region between 1997 and 2011 while around 47.000 IDPs have relocated to the city from other areas between 2000-2012 (Secretary of Health Tumaco, 2012). The high levels of humanitarian challenges have provoked the presence of several government entities working with the provision of basic needs to the population. Another 20 and 30 development organisations are active in the area, giving an indication of the needs both in terms of immediate and long-term development support.

4.2.2 Development Assistance and Humanitarian Response in Colombia

Given the critical humanitarian situation in the country, many national and international aid agencies are operational. Aid donors in Colombia range from donor-countries (bilateral) and international organisations (multilateral) such as the UN and the EU to national companies and NGOs, not to forget the variety of international and national religious organisations working in the country. Colombia also focuses on the consolidation of South-South co-operation (APC-Colombia, 2012). Figures from the International Cooperation Office in Medellin (ACI Medellin), report that the share of development aid as percentage of GDP went down from 1,05 in 2003 to 0,76 in 2006 and further to 0,42 in 2008, with an average of 900 million USD per year for this time period (ACI Medellin, 2012, p. 15).

To illustrate, Colombia receives considerable amounts of bilateral aid for education from the Norwegian and Canadian governments. NMFA grants a total of 104 million Norwegian kroners (NOK) for the year of 2014, from which 7,5 million NOK are earmarked for education (NMFA, 2014). In figure IV the equivalent figures for the year 2013 are presented.

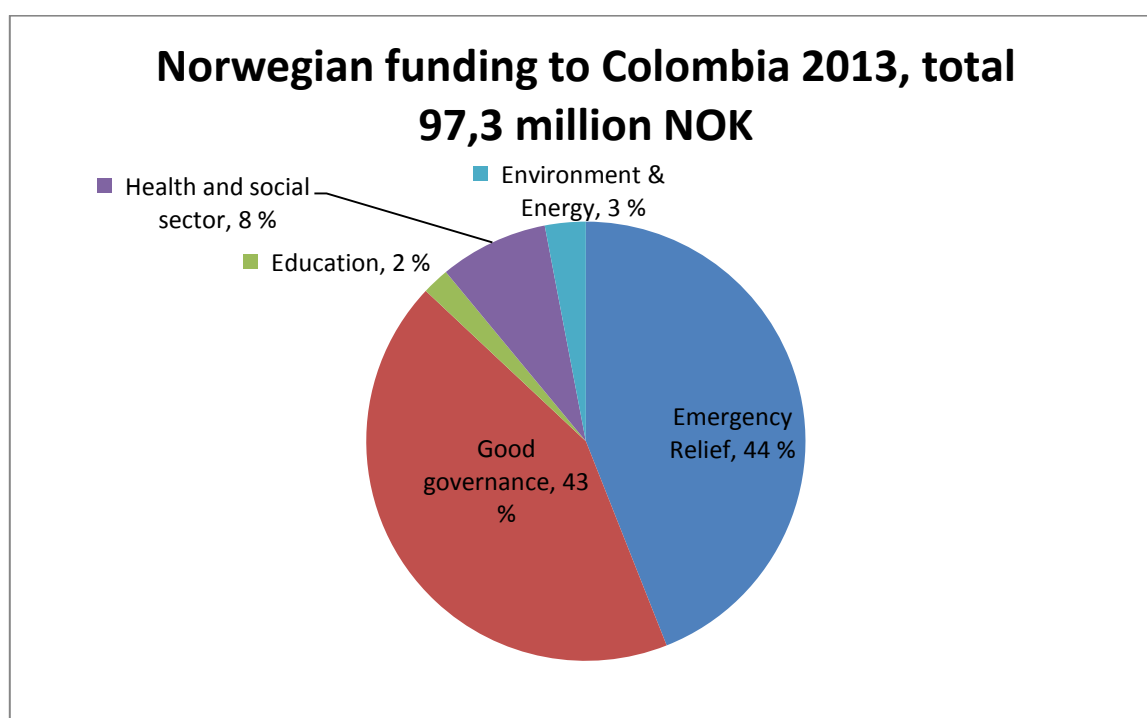


Figure IV: Norwegian funding to Colombia 2013

Source: Norad's grants portal (Norad, 2014b)

In the case of Norwegian aid to Colombia, Norad's grants portal shows that Norway between 2010 and 2014 supported Colombia through multilateral organisations like the UN and alike, as well as through NGOs. Exceptions were made in 2010 and 2013, where the Colombian state received 1,2 million NOK for "good governance", from a total of 86 and 97 million NOK (Norad, 2014b). The percentage of funds channelled directly towards education is low, a mere 2%, but also other funding such as emergency relief is being applied to different education projects throughout the country. Nevertheless, this coincides with the tendency where civil society institutions are financed rather than the state itself.

The Canadian government, represented through CIDA, is another major contributor to Colombia. Between 2012 and 2013 CIDA disbursed Colombia with 23,34 million Canadian Dollars (CAD), where 19,3 million went to long-term development, 4,04 million to

humanitarian assistance. A share of this goes to education, as presented in the case study (CIDA, 2014).

4.2.3 Education for Development

The Colombian government administers international co-operation through the *Colombian Presidential Agency of International Cooperation* (Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia - APC-Colombia). As for APC-Colombia's *National strategy of international cooperation 2012-2014*, there is little emphasis on education, except from the promotion of Spanish language tuition as a foreign language in Colombia. On the other hand, Colombia is working to become an active member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and has signed the Paris declaration on cooperation and development (APC-Colombia, 2012).

According to the Colombian MoE, the education authorities are currently involved in 70 bilateral education projects with as many as 41 countries (MoE Colombia, 2014). The private sector is also an important contributor, with national and international enterprises supporting the MoE (MoE Colombia, 2008b). Moreover, the public entity is also receiving support from multilateral organisations, such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organisation of American States (OAS), and the Organisation of Ibero-American States (OEI) (MoE Colombia, 2008a).

4.3 Education in Conflict

Colombia has a modern constitution dating to 1991, where basic human rights such as linguistic, cultural and religious freedoms and democratic principles are clearly defined. Access to education is identified as a human right in the Colombian constitution. Moreover, the Colombian state has decreed 10 years of mandatory education, starting with pre-school and ending with upper secondary education, the pupils aged roughly between the ages of 5 and 15 (MoE Colombia, 2009, p. 16). Only in 2011 was access to free education for all Colombians implemented, ranging from pre-school to upper secondary education (MoE Colombia, 2011). Although Colombia adopted the MDGs and other strategies for Education for All, the MoE has failed to meet this goal, especially in the case of IDPs and marginalised populations.

4.3.1 The Role of the State in Education

Public funding to education has varied over the last years, and has according to the World Bank declined from 4,8% of total GDP in 2010 to 4,4% in 2012(WB, 2013a). According to the Colombian newspaper *El Espectador*, public investment in education for 2015 augmented 7,5% compared to the previous year, thereby lowering the percentage to 3,6% of total GDP. For the first time education spending exceeds that of the military (down from 3,7 to 3,4% (El Espectador, 2014b). It is said that 95% of the means budgeted for education goes to the payment of teacher salaries (Education manager Colombian NGO, 2013; National Education Official NRC, 2013). This implicates that there are little recourses available for the maintenance of schools and the purchase of learning equipment such as computers.

The official school enrolment rate for primary education sometimes exceeds 100% due to out of school-age or overage enrolment. Education figures for the municipality of Guapi in the department of Cauca show that the gross enrolment rate for primary education is 188%, due to overaged pupils attending school. The net equivalent is 85% (National Education Official NRC, 2013; NRC, 2012). This means that it is difficult to present accurate numbers of school enrolment in the country.

In 2005 public figures reported a 91,6% national literacy rate for people from 15 years and onwards. In urban areas the literacy rate was 94,5%, while the number for rural areas was 81,5%. For the Nariño department, the percentage was 89 (DANE, 2005a). These averages leave out local oscillations. For instance, it is claimed that the literacy rate for Tumaco was 82,9% in 2012(Secretary of Health Tumaco, 2012, p. 19), but also lower values have been presented for the rural areas of the municipality.

A previous decentralisation of pre-school, primary, and secondary education has caused a central alteration in the Colombian education system. The governmental responsibility for education delivery shifted from national administration to departmental and municipal levels, where urban areas with a sizeable population were to have their own education secretariats responsible for schools, which in turn have to answer to so-called education institutions (EIs). An EI is responsible for various schools. With the decentralisation of education authority follows a relocation of recourses and personnel, now being administered on local levels (MoE Colombia, 2009). This shift has caused doubt towards the ability of local governments to employ their education related duties in the interest of the pupils and the local society, as well

as a fear for recourses to disappear on their way to the local governments or directed towards other sectors than education.

4.3.2 Ethno-Education

The Colombian Constitution of 1991 incorporates the country's ethnical plurality. In 1993 the South American republic witnessed the presentation of Law 70, and the Decree 1745 of 1995, which states that ethnic minority groups such as the Afro-Colombians and the Indigenous groups were to be admitted certain autonomy over their territories in which they had been living for long time periods. These laws also underline their group identity; giving them the right to administer their own education to a certain degree. This means that, for instance, local decision makers can influence the curriculum given to Afro-Colombian residents living in the pacific region in order to better reflect local traditions and values (Presidential Program for Human Rights and IHL, 2009, p. 5). Law 70 also reflects the preoccupation by Afro-Colombians that their role in history has been neglected, and that their contribution to the Colombian nation building is practically absent in history lessons taught in Colombian schools. This law proclaims that education should serve to reinforce the protection and development of the rights and identity of the Afro-Colombian population, and that the Colombian state should acknowledge and guarantee the black communities' rights to an education that is sensitive to their ethno-cultural necessities and aspirations. Such education is referred to as ethno-education (EE). Although the state shows proactivity towards the implementation of education adapted to geographical and ethnical context, it is claimed that the government fails to provide adequate education for IDPs and marginalised people (NRC, 2011a, p. 2).

4.3.3 Education in a Humanitarian Context

Due to the high level of armed conflict, children and youth are not attending school for safety reasons, where under the risk of forced recruitments of minors to armed groups. In 2010, UNESCO released a report named *Education under Attack*, stressing that there were substantial irregularities in lower and higher education alike, with severe attacks on school buildings, teachers, students and others in the education sector. A number of 90 teachers were killed between 2006 and 2008, and 260 violations in the teacher sector were reported in 2007. In the same year, around 14.000 child soldiers were active in different armed groups, mainly

in Bacrim and guerrilla groups (UNICEF, 2010). In 2014 a reported 119 minors were recruited to guerrilla and Bacrim units (Colombia Reports, 2014a). Bearing these threats in mind, education projects such as EiE not only serve to maintain school attendance, but also as a protection from harm for school-aged IDPs. By making children and youth attend safe schools, they are more likely to be kept away from this form of recruitment. Through providing education, the humanitarian organisations facilitate their entrance to conflict areas, which frequently is difficult (Team leader Emergency Program, 2013). According to NRC, Colombia is one of the most dangerous countries in the world to attend school (NRC, 2014c).

4.3.4 Education Clusters and Partnerships

Here we take a closer look at these forms of education co-ordination on national and regional scales in Colombia.

On a national level, there exists a cluster for EiE:

UNICEF is co-leader of the National Roundtable for Education in Emergencies with the Ministry of Education and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). For the purpose of the humanitarian coordination mechanisms, UNICEF and NRC are co-leaders. The Roundtable for Education in Emergencies has led to policy contributions and shared lessons learned at the national and department levels. The Roundtable raises the visibility of and promotes rights-based approaches to education in emergencies (UNICEF, 2011, p. 13).

The purpose of this cluster is to co-ordinate several NGOs that provide EiE in different parts, but foremost in southern, Colombia. The Nariño department has its own roundtable for ethno-education, which works with INGOs and EI on the development, implementation and improvement of ethno-education and its corresponding curriculum. The partnership that makes up the base for the case study is mainly between NRC, SCC and RECOMPAS, but also involves government and other education stakeholders.

4.3.5 Education in Tumaco

Tumaco had a population of around 180.000 in 2010, with children representing 38% of its population according to Save the Children Colombia (2012, p. 12). The high amount of IDPs either arriving or leaving Tumaco has direct consequences on school attendance due to several reasons. One problem is that children are forced to leave the school in which they are registered. After relocation, recipient society is often unable to absorb new-comers into their existing schools due to limitations in capacity as well as education regulations. EIs typically

only allow one inscription routine per year, creating problems for those that want to enrol in other occasions due to displacement. While waiting for inscription, many idling children and youth get involved in other legal and illegal activities to sustain themselves and their families.

In terms of education, Tumaco has its own certified education secretariat (ES). Nonetheless, indicators of education are of the poorest in the country, schools receiving the poorest results in national tests. The MoE has categorised Tumaco as “critical” and thereby designated the municipality as a high priority for support (Save the Children Colombia, 2012, p. 13). During 2013 and 2014, an education census in the area conducted by NRC found that only in the city of Tumaco, from a total of 1579 households, 1033 school-age children were not attending school. In the same households they found 1046 people to be illiterate, 71% of them aged 18-26 while 29% between 5-17 years old (NRC, 2015). Although they are very general, national school performance results showed in 2013 that Tumaco obtained the poorest results (Education Official Tumaco SCiC, 2013).

The NGOs perceive that the national government is failing to fulfil its educational responsibilities. Therefore, various NGOs and UN bodies are active in Tumaco as well as in other areas of the country working with improving the public education system, seeking to ensure that all school-aged children attend formal education.

Summary

This chapter has discussed the role of education in a development context as well as in a humanitarian context caused by the armed conflict. It has presented how the Colombian government and international development organisations work towards providing education for out-of-school children whom the public education sector fails to absorb. The NGOs promote education strategies to increase the participation of IDPs and other vulnerable groups that live in rural areas with little presence of state, as well as in informal urban settlements.

5 PRESENTATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

In this part the study's topics are presented, including the partnership for education and the partners involved. The main partners are presented individually, while the less essential are presented together. The data illustrate how the partners depict the partnership and the involved partners.

5.1 About the Partnership and Collected Data

There are two projects from which the partnership has surged. They are of particular value considering that NRC and SC, both normally working with humanitarian assistance, now co-operate in a development project with time frames of five years for each project.

About the donor

The role of the donor CIDA is primarily to finance the projects. In both of the analysed projects, NRC and SC operate as a consortium to receive disbursements and are thereby being referred to by the donor as implementing partners. NRC and CIDA both distinguish between an operational and implementing partner when co-operating with local entities, which as we have seen is common in the development sector and is similar to the strategy of the UNHCR. In its action plan for Basic Education in 2002, CIDA highlighted war, conflict and natural disasters as major challenges to EFA (CIDA, 2005, pp. 15-16). CIDA gives priority to education, and has been active in the region. The Canadian ambassador has met with local schools and pupils, as well as the local governments (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013). Below follows a brief presentation of both projects comprising the partnership.

5.1.1 Project I. Right to Education and Participation for Children and Youth in Nariño

On local level the project was known as *Proyecto Aprendiendo Crecemos/As we learn, we grow project* (PAC). The project, which ran between 2008 and 2012, had a cost limit of 9,6

million CAD and sought to implement alternative pedagogical models aimed at out-of-school indigenous, Afro-Colombian, displaced, and generally vulnerable children, youth and adults. The beneficiaries consisted of five municipalities of the Nariño department, including Tumaco. According to the donor, the project accomplished that 2268 conflict-affected and vulnerable children and youth and another 580 adults got access to alternative Flexible Education Models (FEMs). A total of 993 teachers were trained to teach these models. The project managed to train 1786 teachers in conventional public schools with the goal of effectively implementing new teaching and learning practices, enhancing the quality of available education (CIDA, 2015b).

The project was a partnership consisting primarily of CIDA, NRC, Save the Children Canada (SCC), and RECOMPAS. But there were also other entities involved: The MoE, regional education secretariats (ES), Educational Institutions (EIs), the universities Udenar and UNAD, as well as two national NGOs for the design and implementation of FEMs. The national NGOs have not been consulted in this study.

The implementation of the project consisted of the following products, namely three different FEMs all aimed at alternative pedagogical curricula adapted to conflict-affected children and youth:

- *Círculos de Aprendizaje* (Learning Circles), elaborated with the MoE and in co-operation with a local education NGO, which served 746 boys and girls in Tumaco between 2009 and 2011. A model that helps the children into the school, as well as facilitating their continuity in the education institution once enrolled.
- The *Bachillerato Pacicultor* (High School for Peace - HFP²), aimed primarily at displaced women from 15 years and older residing in marginal areas of Tumaco. Out of the 462 attending the model, 85% were female. The model was planned and implemented by NRC, a local NGO and Udenar.
- *Etno-Alfabetización and Etno-bachillerato* (Ethno-Literacy and Ethno High School - EHS), models that focus on rural education adapted to local conditions, which served 516 students, as a protecting measure towards the families risking

² This term corresponds to upper secondary education, known as A levels in the United Kingdom. The degree qualifies for studies in higher education. Here we use *high school*, as it is locally used in English in the project.

forced recruitment, anti-personal mines, prostitution networks, and restrictions in free movement. The model was operated and technically managed by RECOMPAS.

The three models were all evaluated and approved by SET and the EIs in which the FEMs took place (NRC, 2013b).

When PAC ended in 2012, it was replaced by a second project, which included new municipalities as beneficiaries, which is often a condition by the donors. The only municipality that was maintained was Tumaco because it is considered as a principal receptor and remitter of IDPs, and therefore with persisting humanitarian challenges (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013).

5.1.2 Project II. Protecting Children's Education in South-West Colombia

The second project is locally known as *Vive la Educación/Education Lives* (VLE). In this case, CIDA, NRC and SC continued their co-operation with many of the partners from the former project, except from the national NGOs. The academic institutions UNAD and Udenar were substituted by Unicauca, who is currently responsible for the production of the curricula.

The current project was launched in 2013 and is planned to run until 2018, with a budget of 18,5 million CAD. According to the project description, its aim is to ensure that vulnerable, conflict-affected children and youth have access to quality education in the departments of Cauca and Nariño. It focuses on teacher training as well as local empowerment in the public sector through seeking to improve education policy and administrative management (CIDA, 2015a).

During its period of implementation, the goal of the project is to benefit 120.000 children and youth from a total of 68 EIs in Cauca and Nariño. Three pillars are guiding the project: 1. the improvement of education quality, 2. access to and completion of basic education for children deprived of schooling and, 3. the strengthening of institutional capacity and increased involvement of regional and national education authorities. It is also mentioned that the principal active partners in the project, apart from the two NGOs, are departmental education secretariats in Nariño and Cauca, the education secretariat of Tumaco (SET), the MoE and Bvlgari, a commercial enterprise granting funding. Other additional partners include ethnical

organisations and CSOs, probably referring to RECOMPAS (Save the Children Colombia, 2015b).

To sum up, in both projects the partnership aims to include children and youth that need another environment than the “normal” school. The main challenge is to identify the children currently outside the education system, enrol them and then keep them in school. The project also seeks to increase education quality in the schools in order to raise education outcomes. This again can be related to the EFA strategy which we saw was one of the MDGs for 2015. Apart from the mentioned projects, NRC and SC both run similar projects in Tumaco and other parts of Colombia looking to protect the children and youth in social spaces, as well as other projects related to emergency relief and water and sanitation. In the next sections we present the principal partners of the partnership.

5.2 The Norwegian Refugee Council in Colombia

NRC is a non-profit, mainly humanitarian organisation with international reputation for its work with refugees and internally displaced persons. It was established in 1946, with the aim of assisting WW2 refugees in Europe, and is operating in about 25 countries with a total staff of 5000 (NRC, 2014a). The organisation currently employs 92 national staff members in Colombia, while two are of international origin. This contrasts to other traditions where international NGOs mainly employ international staff in their areas of work. NRC has been active in the country since 1991, and works with three priorities towards refugees and IDPs in Colombia, Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador: Education, Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA), and Emergency Response. The latter subject refers to immediate response to emergencies such as massive displacements or flooding, where the organisation offers EiE, protection, shelter and food aid. They also work with advocacy through their IPP Program: Influence and Public Policy (NRC, 2014b). Below we present some previous experiences the NGO has established towards partnerships.

5.2.1 Partnership for Education

NRC distinguishes between operational and implementing partners in their education handbook. The book reports that the NGO normally implements the education projects itself, although it has established some relationships with partners in some countries. These may be

education authorities, UN agencies or international or local NGOs. NRC highlights that it has an active co-operation with the UNHCR, bearing in mind that it is an important partner not at least considering the top-level political support it offers. As for the case of Colombia, the handbook states that the organisation is working closely with NGOs, universities and the MoE. Further on, the handbook mentions that partnerships can be sought with: MoE on all levels from national to local; UN agencies; Universities; Teacher training institutions, local NGOs; and International NGOs. In considering this type of co-operation, three issues are highlighted: accountability, political implications, and administration coverage in cases where NRC is implementing (NRC, 2009, pp. 37-38).

In the NRC Education Handbook, of a total of 57 pages, only a half page is dedicated to partnerships. Nevertheless, it has other sections related to co-operation, with authorities and “other actors” such as NGOs, with the aim of avoiding project overlap with other organisations, as well as assuring information exchange and local competency development. The Handbook states that to the possible extent, local human resources and materials are to be used; an important aspect that shows how some organisations give priority to the use of local resources instead of “importing” them from e.g. the global North. It also mentions that NRC should work with education clusters and networks such as IASC and INEE (NRC, 2009, pp. 32-37).

5.2.2 Previous Evaluations of NRC and Partnerships

A Norad evaluation from 2007 on the work of NRC with IDPs in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Colombia, stated that the organisation was lacking a clear strategy towards national NGOs, groups defined as its partners, and public institutions, where diverging practices were identified. Likewise, there was no clear description of what the term *partnership* referred to, neither what the role of NRC should be in this type of relationship. The report related this tendency towards the NGO being self-implementing, instead of working through other partner organisations. Nevertheless, in the case of Colombia, partners such as UNHCR, UNICEF, World Food Programme (WFP) and government entities like the Procurator General were identified. There were also established partnerships with universities and CSOs within education and ICLA in Colombia. The evaluation reported that some co-operating organisations were treated as contracted implementers of NRC projects. These organisations had no involvement in project development, while they had limited knowledge

about the work of NRC. Local organisations had neither received any capacity development (Norad, 2007, pp. 59-60).

Based on the previous, Norad concluded that the lack of a partnership strategy towards partners in civil society might impose a limitation of NRC's potential both for improving assistance delivery and for influencing decision makers. Even though, the evaluation found that within ICLA there were identified some successful relationships with local entities, which led to a reciprocal empowerment of the involved organisations. For Norad, the conditions for NGO funding state the following requirements: 1. Help build the capacity and competence of the partner; 2. Add value to the partnership beyond channelling financial resources; and 3. Strengthen civil society of which the partner organisation is a part. In this case, the report is clear on that NRC has to address its partnership issues in terms of the continuation of funding of its projects (Norad, 2007, pp. 59-60).

5.2.3 Collected Data from NRC

Partnership and co-ordination

In PAC and VLE, an implementing partner refers to entities responsible for the design, development, and the institutionalisation of the FEMs, and receives financial resources. On the other hand, a strategic partner is identified by its technical or political authority, as well as financial and administrative capacity (institutionalisation), facilitating the integration of de FEMS into the national education system, and do not receive resources. In an internal evaluation of PAC, the principal partners mentioned are education authorities such as MoE and ESs, as well as communitarian organisations and international development organisations (NRC, 2013b).

According to the educational official for Nariño from NRC, with PAC, a lot was co-ordinated from the office in Bogota, which led to a shock when the project was implemented in the region, considering that reality was different to the dreams of the ones seated in Bogota. "In the current project [VLE], (...) the implementation plan was designed together with Save, and not apart from each other". The official depicts this as a "marriage". She also mentions that it would be ideal to do everything together with Save:

We would like to do everything together with Save, but time and activities are sometimes demanding, therefore we are not able to do so. [...] A main task for the organisations

[NGOs] is to obtain confidence in the areas where they work. [The official is from the region herself]. The presence of the official helps the project to gain confidence [...]. Therefore the communities have opened their doors for the Council [NRC]. With this, apart from respect, NRC has gained credibility. We always focus on doing actions without harming anyone, while working together (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013).

The above statement highlights the importance of establishing good relations with the local community to legitimise the project, as well as gaining confidence from it. The goal is to arrive to the areas as projects, and not as organisations, meaning that she sees the alliance as a team. Nevertheless, the alliance with Save implicates working the projects separately: NRC is responsible for the area of access to education, while SC works with education quality. Both NGOs are responsible for training and strengthening of public entities and CBOs (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013).

WORKING WITH LOCAL NGOS

The PAC involved two partnering Colombian NGOs who helped with the design of the FEMs. According to sources in NRC, co-operation with two local NGOs ended, and are discontinued in VLE. With the first NGO the partnership ended since they completed their work with their FEM and successfully delivered it to MoE, which institutionalised the model, meaning that it was incorporated to the education system. In the case of the second NGO, co-operation ended since it was unwilling to “give away” its model, in terms of replicating it and work to implement it into the national education system (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013; Retired National Education Manager NRC, 2013). The education official in Nariño perceives the relation with the NGOs as traumatic, since they would not release the FEM high school for peace (HFP). “They said it was theirs, and therefore would not institutionalise it. Because, the goal is always that the state takes responsibility for the FEMs, therefore this was a bad outcome of the co-operation with the NGO” (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013).

According to another source in NRC, the co-operation with the local NGOs did not work out since it turned out that NRC and the Colombian NGOs had different goals for the co-ordination, where the former focused on education, while the latter in reality had peace as their primary outcome. Apart from this, the manager claims that the NGOs were not interested in sharing the developed FEMs with other partners such as co-operating universities in other regions of the country (National Education Manager NRC, 2013).

NRC’s National Education Manager says there is minimal co-operation with national and local NGOs. Instead, it focuses on co-operation with CBOs, especially the ones advocating

the interests of indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. According to him, one reason for this was that Colombian NGOs tend to have private agendas not matching the ones of NRC. Also, the manager claimed that regional NGOs often lacked technical capacity. Therefore, instead of using NGOs, the Norwegian organisation prefers to use Colombian consultants. On general levels, NRC has few alliances within their education projects in the country. Rather, the organisation has more alliances within their work with IDPs and refugees (National Education Manager NRC, 2013).

THE PUBLIC SECTOR

In terms of co-operation with the public sector, the national education manager states that they often work with MoE and ESs, where they mutually share expenses and technical resources in implementing different education projects. Many times NRC or UNICEF help MoE or SEs with technical resources or other specialised capacity the education authorities are lacking. In this way NRC serves as a sort of sub-contractor, but never receives financing directly due to independency measures, but other NGOs have done this. He states that it can be challenging working with the MoE, since they tend to “take the control” in decision-making. But they have to work with them for advocacy reasons. He also expresses concern of the difficulty to co-ordinate many partners, which is very expensive. But the success also depends on the support of the universities and MoE for official certification of the FEMs.

In terms of the relationship with the ESs, it has been clear what are the objects of Save and the Council [NRC], and also what is to be the role of the secretariats. Still, I think that the ESs, with their supposedly bad financial situation, sometimes see us as a provider of services, free for them to use, claiming they have no money. This is linked to corruption. They [ESs] need a more efficient management of resources. In the current project, in terms of planning and implementation, NRC, SCiC and SET have had time to discuss and dialogue about the roles of each entity. In the current project the role of each partner is a lot clearer. Now SET are aware of how far we [NRC and SCiC] can come with the project (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013).

This shows that there SET shows more confidence towards the co-operation.

Equality in decision-making, Communication, project outcomes and transparency

The interviewed staff working with education all comment that the involved partners in the project mainly have the same goal, which is education for vulnerable populations. The manager comments that it is NRC who decides the outcome of products. “We only use local resources for the elaboration of limited projects, where they do not include the consultants in

project development.” In terms of the alliance with SCiC, the manager emphasises that there is complete equality in decision-making, since none of them are sub-ordinated: “They [SCiC] develop the quality component, while we [NRC] [are in charge of] the access [to the education] component. Here the NGOs work directly with the EIs” (National Education Manager NRC, 2013).

The retired manager reiterates that he left NRC due to the issue where donor requirements got more demanding, where the donor wanted to influence decision-making and control how the NGO should be working. “Finally, it is a business, where NGOs need recourses to survive. He retires [talking about PAC] since CIDA more and more wanted quantitative results [number of children helped] instead of qualitative [for instance education quality] (Retired National Education Manager NRC, 2013).

WORKING WITH SC

The partnership with [SCiC] implicates a lot of co-ordination; this was especially difficult in the first project. Today we feel that we have a more cordial relationship with SCiC, particularly here in the office [in Tumaco]. [SCiC] has the advantage that their beneficiaries are already located within the EIs, while ours need to be found, working against the clock. We would love to co-ordinate everything together, but the limitations are that each organisation has different interests and necessities (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013). Apart from the differences between SC and NRC, the co-operation between them was successful, and is continued in the VLE project (National Education Official NRC, 2013).

Sustainability, Challenges, and Local Empowerment

During the first years of the implementation of the first project, several challenges in terms of partnership and co-ordination were reported. In a project evaluation for the years 2008-2010 it was commented that NRC was not well-prepared to negotiate appropriate terms either with SCC or with the donor, CIDA. Instead, it was asserted that NRC allowed itself to be pushed into an unworkable project management arrangement, something that lead to problems in terms of implementation, managing contracted partners, navigating the contractual requirements of a new donor, and working with the demands of “development” rather than a humanitarian funding approach (Thomas, Szabo, & Hinestroza, 2011, p. 22). In terms of sustainability, the report highlighted that the FEMs would not be sustainable after withdrawal

of NRC and donor support without intensive advocacy work (Thomas et al., 2011, p. 26). This shows that the project is considered not to be sustainable in the long run, since it is fully dependent on the presence of the NGOs and the donor.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

NRC also experienced problems in the co-operation with UNAD with the design of the FEMs; therefore they terminated the partnership with the university and transferred the responsibility to a technical team corresponding to RECOMPAS (National Education Manager NRC, 2013). Several sources in NRC agree on that there have been a lot of negotiations with MoE in terms of promoting the FEMs and advocating towards the Ministry. Also NRC offers technical support, as well as help with logistics for example with field visits, but the NGO never gives financial resources to the state (Education Official in Nariño, 2013; Retired National Education Manager NRC, 2013). With this it can be said that NRC functions as a consultant for the MoE.

NRC serves as implementing entity with its specialised knowledge on working with IDPs and education, something that ESs do not possess on regional and local levels. The problem is that technical capacity remains centralised. Another problem is that the installed FEMs are not being followed up, nor financed by neither the ESs nor MoE. The MoE says it leaves trained personnel, but changes geographical priorities, and no-one to operate the model. On local levels, both civil society and authorities are precarious. The problem is that although MoE has vast financial resources and technical capacity, it fails to transfer these in a successful way to the regions [...] (National Education Manager NRC, 2013).

It was difficult to start the PAC, both donors and government were critical. It was difficult for MoE and the implementing EIs to accept curricula not directly relevant to the traditional classes such as maths and geography, and how MoE should measure the results, “since this entity only thinks in matters of national tests to measure the pupils, such as SABER and ICFES³”. When FEM pupils presented good results with these tests, donors and MoE were more positive towards it (Retired National Education Manager NRC, 2013).

Although NRC effectuates the census [surveying the extent of out-of-school children in VLA], it is SET who is responsible for what to do with the results, as they are responsible for

³ These are Colombian tests used on national level to examine the knowledge of the pupils in different subjects such as Mathematics and similar.

connecting them to the education system. NRC uses teachers for this work, but do not pay the teachers for tutoring activities. NRC finances the MEF together with SET. There has been discussion with some IEs since their administration would not continue with the FEMs without 100% financing by NRC (Pedagogical Advisor EE NRC, 2013). In terms of sustainability, “although the education project were to end, we still have left a trained and fortified RECOMPAS, as well as leaving established relations between the authorities, CBOs and NGOs, making future relations possible for other outcomes” (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013).

RECOMPAS

The education official for Nariño claims that RECOMPAS has received a lot of training during the first project from NRC in terms of administration and finances, since few of the leaders have formal education within this sector. For instance were they not used with invoices and estimates. Today, the administration of RECOMPAS is better, because they have received more training, especially with financing. For example, several of the leaders have successfully graduated from the EHS model. But still, RECOMPAS is consolidating itself in the current project.

Before we protected and provided RECOMPAS more. Today, we are more a facilitator for them; they work more on their own. E.g. we organise meetings with MoE or SET where the partners meet on equal grounds. Earlier RECOMPAS were challenged by the state since it lacked the technical and juridical language for balanced discussions and negotiations with the state. With our training, the CSOs are better prepared to meet the state in more equal manners (Education Official in Nariño NRC, 2013).

A previous project evaluation for the year 2010 also shows that there has been consolidation in the capabilities of public universities and local community organisations to implement, operate and monitor the FEMs. It also reports an increase in the capabilities of the EIs to provide an inclusive education, as well as greater participation by the government in the institutionalisation and diffusion of the FEMs (NRC, 2011b).

New findings

The education approach, especially in emergency situations, serves as a protecting strategy for the NGOs such as NRC. In the name of education, NRC obtains legitimacy among the local communities and armed actors to intervene in the affected area, so that they can give necessary support, both in terms of education, but also giving food and shelter, and other

protection measures to recently displaced populations, as was confirmed by members of NRC staff.

5.3 Save the Children

Like NRC, SCI is also an organisation working with humanitarian assistance in emergency situations, although it is primarily a rights-based organisation working with children and youth on a global level. For over 90 years the organisation has been working in more than 120 countries. In Colombia SC has had presence since 1986, where its four main pillars are: 1. Education; 2. Protection; 3. Participation; and 4. Emergency Assistance (Save the Children Colombia, 2015a).

Save the Children has had an organisational restructuring in the sense that in previous years and with PAC, it was Save the Children Canada that worked with CIDA, whereas today it is Save the Children Colombia (SCiC), the national presence of SCI, who is the leading entity working in the area where the project is taking place. This has to do with the institutional structure of the organisation. For instance, previous, in Colombia several Save the Children country branches operated, such as Save the Children Canada, Save the Children United Kingdom, Save the Children Norway (Redd Barna) etc. This led to problems in terms of project overlapping, where different SC units worked in the same areas and with the same populations, leading to implementation inefficiency (National Humanitarian Issues Manager, 2013).

In terms of partnership policies, there is lesser documentation available in the case of SC. Still, the NGO has high levels of experience working with the UN, as well as other international development organisations.

5.3.1 Collected Data from SC

Partnership and co-ordination

From the interviews, although SC has many partners on different levels, it is clear that NRC is considered to be the main ally of SC. The alliance is based on covering some flaws in terms of the education system in the region, and reunites the experiences and technical specialisation of both NGOs.

Since NRC has more experience working with the territory outside the school, they work there, while we in SC are more experienced with working inside the schools, so we put together our knowledge in the project. Although we work apart, the vision is to work integrated (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

SC admits that they search partners or allies when they need specific technical knowledge, for instance with help in designing curricula for education. “Sometimes these partners are more executors [implementing] than allies, and it includes resource transfers. But we refer to them as allies more than implementing entities” (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

Internal evaluations of PAC show that there were challenges of project management, where the relation between SCC and NRC was depicted as a “forced marriage”. The evaluations state that each NGO managed its own project; therefore it was necessary to require a joint decision-making on all aspects. Later a new structure was introduced to give NRC and SCC the autonomy to implement their parts of the project with a needed degree of independence (Thomas et al., 2011, p. 22). Therefore a management committee was created where both NRC and SC were involved and had monthly meetings.

During PAC, both NRC and SCC experienced change of project co-ordinators, staff and national administrative personal. This affected the project since new people had to be trained, and relations with other partners had to be consolidated through new acquaintances. There was also a project manager on behalf of NRC that had to be replaced since he was receiving death threats (SCC & NRC, 2009). This was confirmed in an interview with SC staff in Popayan (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013; National isEducation Official SC, 2013). One also found differences in administrative measures regarding NRC and SC. The project evaluation states that NRC worked more centralised from Bogota, while SC worked more on local level with the involved communities. Also, NRC shared project personal with other projects, making them less dedicated to PAC (Capra International Inc., 2013, pp. 73-74). In the second project we saw that the two NGOs share office in Tumaco, making it possible for increased synchronisation in terms of co-operation (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

In terms of alliances between public and private organisations, the SC co-ordinator for the protection team in Tumaco states that the local government should respond more to improve the alliances with the NGOs. In Tumaco there are 16-18 NGOs, and there is little co-operation between them, in spite of working with the same issues. In addressing the government, the co-ordinator states: “Los funcionarios no funcionan” – the public servants do not serve [or

function]. According to the interviewee, the local government is weak, and uses NGOs to do their education work (Co-ordinator protection team SCiC, 2013).

Equality in decision-making, Communication, project outcomes and transparency

The education official for northern Nariño for SC mentions that the communication has been good with NRC, and that they have met frequently with round-tables, also including the CSOs, and in the phase of project planning.

Well, but in the terrain Save, maybe, in the activities we have not had a lot of communication [with NRC]. We are very busy with our projects. Now there is little communication, although we started up well with NN [from NRC], but now everyone goes with its own way, and I think that we both [SC and NRC] have goals to accomplish. It has not been very fluid (Education Official Northern Nariño SCiC, 2013).

The former tells us that it can be challenging to maintain good communication when the partners are occupied with their projects working “in the field”. Especially is this relevant for NRC, which works mainly in rural areas, sometimes hours and days away from Tumaco, either by boat and/or roads of poor quality.

The SC co-ordinator claims that the VLE project has perfected the co-ordination, and is better than in PAC. The roles are clear and well-defined, as well as the activities with the EIs, and the products and negotiations. The responsibilities of each partner are clear, except for the inter-institutional management with the education authorities, which has challenges.

We always have to sit down with them [NRC] to decide on what activities to plan, working as a project, and not separated. This is a constant challenge. Now NRC has someone responsible for the project, and not at the same time for other NRC projects, as it was earlier. Also, NRC has stronger commitment with the management of the “ground” organisations, [such as RECOMPAS], more than Save [the Children] (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

Working with SET and MoE

The project has a strategy that includes a direct communication with MoE, a communication with the ESs on municipal level, and also a direct communication with the part of the municipalities and their local management. The relations have been good, both in Tumaco and Nariño, although we think, or I think that in this part maybe there has not been a lot since we already have dedicated us to the work, where we are gathering information for later use when we sit down and plan. [...] With the municipal education secretariats we have achieved to share costs, e.g. for transportation (Education Official Northern Nariño SCiC, 2013).

The previous comments show that the project is dependent on the public sector for project implementation.

WORKING WITH RECOMPAS

“With RECOMPAS, there have been more results in Tumaco. In northern Nariño we have had some challenges working with them, since they have not agreed with our proposals. Besides RECOMPAS, we also work with other community councils” (Education Official Northern Nariño SCiC, 2013). The education official for Tumaco comments that she has still not met RECOMPAS, since the project is in its initial phase, leaving only three weeks in functionality at the time of the interview. While with SET she has had two meetings. There are many new SC staff members in Nariño and Cauca. She also admits that there are several people working for NRC which she has not had a lot of communication with, and she does not know their names (Education Official Tumaco SCiC, 2013). This indicates little communication and co-operation between NRC and SC on a local level in Tumaco, although this also can be related to the fact that the official has spent little time in office.

Sustainability, Challenges, and Local Empowerment

Regarding the alliance, SC staff supports its functionality.

I feel that it works well. Between NRC and SC the roles are well defined on who does what. I am optimistic towards this kind of alliances, and also working with EE also. There should be more alliances. With RECOMPAS, there are sometimes challenges, sometimes they do not agree, e.g. at first they hesitated to join the EE project. It takes a lot of effort to get to agreements with all the partners on a common agenda (Education Official Northern Nariño SCiC, 2013).

According to the local education official in Tumaco, the project has a “carrot”, meaning that when the project with the EIs is successfully completed, the schools receive a financial compensation, which they can use for investments in equipment. When working in the schools, SC also provides snack and lunches as a strategy of motivating the involved pupils and teachers (Education Official Tumaco SCiC, 2013).

For SC the MoE is a strategic important partner, since they conceive the IEs as important, which in their turn are led by the MoE. With SET there is also a good co-ordination.

They offered us personal especially for the project. This is aggregated value to the project. [...] Earlier we did not have a strong relationship with SET, but this time it is more vital. In the previous project things went bad, due to a lot of changes of administration staff, additionally there secretary was replaced three times. This led to good and bad experiences with the project. In the current project we belief that the relationships are better, and we are working with a more stable work force in SET. But after all, the SET is one of the SEs most difficult to work with, they are very closed. But they have participated in the design of the project, adjustments, and implementation of the project. Now they are

good, but it has taken a lot of work to get there (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

This shows that there have been challenges for SC working with the local government. SET has other visions and priorities. They have other expectations. The SET understands and supports the project. Still, they are more concerned with how SET should be administered. The SET fails to have presence in the local schools. The schools are abandoned by SET (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

Moreover, the co-ordinator comments that it is a big project with a lot of resources involved. The challenge is to adapt the project to local conditions, since it is a project that has a very local/regional focus. The use of local resources (employment) has advantages, since they know the area and its people, but also creates limitations in terms of awareness and seeing the project in a bigger picture. External qualified persons are reluctant to work in the zones comprising the project. This is a problem since the project depends on decentralised personnel (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

It is also a challenge to work together as a project. “Therefore we invite each other to our activities, when working with EIs or CSOs or similar. The problem is that people think they have an event with Save, while the goal is that the partners link to the project, and not the NGO involved.

With the alliance, the challenge is, e.g. when SC is organising an event: 1. Linking NRC to the event (co-ordinate agendas), 2. That it contributes to the project, and 3. That they [NRC] obtain results, which are different to ours [results, SC], considering that it is the same event. E.g., I work with principals and children, while they [NRC] work with community councils etc., promoting access to education. Lastly, NRC and SC manage the CIDA-resources independently (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

This underlines the strategy that the NGOs want to be identified working together as a project, and not on individual basis. Lastly, in terms of local empowerment, a main goal is to strengthen public institutions such as the ESs. At the same time, we are not replacing public responsibilities, such as the running of schools, since this is the work of the state (Co-ordinator for Cauca and Nariño SC, 2013).

5.4 RECOMPAS

The corporation *the Network of Community Councils of the South Pacific* has an ethnical character, especially representing the Afro-Colombian communities in the region. It is a conglomerate of 15 rural community councils situated in the municipalities of Tumaco and Francisco Pizarro, Nariño (RECOMPAS, 2008).

According to the corporation, it was founded in January 2003 due to a necessity to reunite the various community councils, as a way to bridge the relations between the communities and the public institutions on local, departmental, national and international levels, including NGOs and other development organisations. Its main principals is to promote organisational, social, political, economic, environmental and cultural development of the Afro-communities of the Colombian South Pacific (RECOMPAS, 2014) and based on information by staff members from RECOMPAS.

It has also to be noted that RECOMPAS was founded in a previous development project which was financed through a Dutch company (Education Co-ordinator RECOMPAS, 2013). Another source in RECOMPAS states that the focus of the Dutch project was to work with productivity and social issues with the communities comprising the councils (Staff Members RECOMPAS, 2013). This tells us that the creation of the organisation can be addressed to external organisations, which again gives indications of that the community councils were founded for specific reasons by a NGO or company, rather than being a “natural” creation by originating from the communities themselves.

According to NRC, the communitarian councils are recognised by the state through the Law 70 from 1993 and Decree 1745 of 1995 as formally in charge of the administration and governing of their communities, meaning that they possess certain political autonomy. The conglomeration represents the vision of ethno development in the Afro-Colombian communities in the South Pacific area (NRC, 2013b).

As we can see with the example of the Dutch company, as well as the compiled data, RECOMPAS is active in working with partners, on which they are dependent in terms of financing of their projects in their communities.

5.4.1 Data collected from RECOMPAS

The following data was collected in different settings. Half of the interviews were effectuated in the office of NRC and SC. This can affect the validity of the data, although the researcher got the impression of that the interviewees spoke freely. Most of the others were run in the facilities of the corporation. The interview with the EE advisor and former secretary of education was done outside Tumaco since the interviewee was currently displaced.

Partnership and co-ordination

RECOMPAS depicts the partnership as an alliance. In this, SCiC is not central, neither CIDA. NRC is the main partner, referred to as the financial partner. The public entities MoE, SEs, IEs and universities are seen as partners who are necessary for the institutionalisation of the project. MoE and SET were not active in the development of the EE project, only in the implementing phase. SET has barely been involved. Rather has NRC been central. It would not have been possible without their support (President of Directive Council RECOMPAS, 2013). Further on, the universities are responsible for curricula development, while also contributing with teacher training. A staff member of RECOMPAS commented that UNAD entered PAC as the official entity, giving the project public credibility (Staff Members RECOMPAS, 2013). Regarding the same subject, the education advisor informs that UNAD has been advising RECOMPAS, as well as education EE teachers, although now this task has been replaced by Unicauca. Further on he states that his organisation has not been working directly with SCiC with PAC, since the former entity was not involved with the EE. Even so, RECOMPAS met SCiC during PAC and an alliance was formed there to administrate the resources. But, “Save the Children has been working more with the management of the high school for peace [HFP], thus from our side, it has been more a direct responsibility of the Norwegian council” [referring to NRC]. Regarding the donor, “CIDA has been active, but the resources have been channelled through the Norwegian council, which has completely financed the proposal [referring to EE], and has been active in all stages of the project.” CIDA has realised frequent field visits (Advisor EE RECOMPAS, 2013).

The advisor on education is aware of that in the country “they cannot stand alone”. Hence, “we need to stand together with others”. Therefore RECOMPAS depends on its allies. “It would not be possible without the help of the Norwegian council, which has financed the project 100%. Nor would it be possible without RECOMPAS and the EIs. We depend on the

public entities for the students to graduate, and thereby the support of the Ministry [of Education]. We depend on the Ministry in terms of approval.”

Co-operation

RECOMPAS was granted high levels of autonomy related to the implementation of FEMs in their communities. In a final report from 2013, closing the first project, RECOMPAS appears as the responsible entity for all levels in the execution of the EHS in their corresponding communities. In terms of co-operation with NRC, the CBO reports that it experienced excellent inter-personal relations with NRC staff, as well as with the teachers responsible for the FEM. Further on, RECOMPAS evaluated positively the relations with SET and teachers and administrative personal from involved EIs (Staff Members RECOMPAS, 2013)..

Equality in decision-making, Communication, project outcomes and transparency

The advisor on ethno-education states that RECOMPAS has full autonomy in terms of project design of EE. “We are very clear on what we want” (Advisor EE RECOMPAS, 2013).

There are good levels of communication with the other partners. In terms of internal communication within RECOMPAS and the EE project, it was commented that the team met up every Friday, no matter the circumstances. Regarding PAC, it was important that RECOMPAS was included in the decision-making (Staff Members RECOMPAS, 2013).

Since the beginning, the roles have been clear: RECOMPAS implements the proposal, the Norwegian council accompanies and obtains the resources, the Secretariat [SET] has accompanied and approved the proposal, and the EIs, well, also assume the model and graduate the people. Like always difficulties have been presented, but for us we have everything clear, about our role, as well as being owners of the territory. We know what we need and want. We do not negotiate our territory (Advisor EE RECOMPAS, 2013).

Several sources in RECOMPAS agreed on that, in terms of the EHS, the main alliance is between NRC and RECOMPAS. NRC is seen in many ways as the financial partner, although the main donor is CIDA. RECOMPAS partnership with SET, MoE, IEs and universities are mainly for institutionalising the project (Advisor EE RECOMPAS, 2013).

Sustainability, Challenges, and Local Empowerment

In terms of training, RECOMPAS has received a lot, especially in management and financial administration (NRC, SC, & CIDA, 2011). For RECOMPAS, the education advisor is positive towards more alliances, whenever it serves a common goal, education:

In spite of different roles, that each project partner should have, it has been most synchronisation in terms of common goals between the Norwegian council and RECOMPAS. The ministry, through its institutions has only validated the model. [MoE] had an accompanying role, but was not exercising it. Only now when we say it is necessary, are they connecting with the project. Although, SET, through its quality office, has followed-up closely until the expedition of licenses of approval [for graduation] (Advisor EE RECOMPAS, 2013).

About sustainability, the advisor is aware of that NRC one day is leaving. Even though, he is optimistic on future alliances working with EE, and hopes the FEM will be approved by the state, although this is a difficult task. Apart from the advisor, several sources in RECOMPAS mention that they “need to learn how to walk”, considering that NRC is not going to stay there to help them, only guide them on the way. This we understand as leaving local empowerment. The EE gives new opportunities to the people, instead of just having to choose between the guerrilla and coca production (Advisor EE RECOMPAS).

5.5 The Public Education Entities

A project evaluation from 2009 stated that MoE and ESs are important for political sustainability: “Participation and commitment from the Secretaries of Education and the National Ministry of Education are required to validate and provide legal and financial support for the permanence and expansion of the changes that have been generated” (NRC & SCC, 2009, p. 28). On the other side, the universities have other roles regarding technical-pedagogical sustainability:

The role of the universities (Universidad de Nariño and UNAD) is central to guarantee continuity and quality of project objectives in the long term. UNAD is currently a strategic partner of the rural project in Tumaco. The Project faces the challenge of gaining commitment and participation from the University of Nariño (NRC & SCC, 2009, p. 28).

5.5.1 Education Secretariat of Tumaco

In Nariño, most of the EIs are administrated from the capital of the department, Pasto, where the regional Education Secretary is situated. Even so, municipalities and cities of certain size

in terms of population usually have their own certified education authority. This is the case of the municipalities of Ipiales and Tumaco. This means that in the rest of the department, education is administered centrally in the capital. The Secretary is therefore responsible for the quality development of education policies, plans and programmes, and has autonomy. It has to comply with a transparent and efficient use of financial resources aimed at educating all children and youth between 5 and 17 years old. It is also responsible for the approbation of education plans, amongst others the implementation of flexible education models (FEMs) (NRC, 2013b). The Education Secretariat is responsible for 13 rural and 13 urban EIs (Responsible Area of Quality SET, 2013). The IEs run three school sessions a day due to the large amount of pupils: morning, afternoon and night, meaning that the pupils assist to one of these. One EI can have several school buildings, and possesses certain autonomy in planning for education (Responsible Area of Coverage SET, 2013).

5.5.2 Data from the Secretariat of Education

In the development plan for Tumaco for the years 2012-2015 elaborated by the local government, education is given three out of 228 pages. It states that there are serious challenges to education quality, high numbers of out-of-school children and youth (citing NRC), high levels of illiteracy with 17%, and high figures of school dropouts. The Plan, (citing MoE), highlights that education is an important measure for combating poverty and inequality, increase the economy, and construct democratic societies (Alcaldía de Tumaco, 2012, pp. 38-40). Nevertheless, there is no clear strategy for how the local government is to work with these issues. The following opinions of the SET are presented by three employees, one from the area of planning, the second works with coverage, while the third works in the area of quality. They were all interviewed together in the facilities of NRC in Tumaco, which can have affected the interview setting since they were present at the office of the partner, something that again can weaken the validity of the data.

Partnership and co-ordination

The responsible for planning admits that their work and responsibilities towards education would be very difficult without the alliance. “We would not be able, we have no resources. We would have to abandon a population. The alliances have thereby been fundamental. They support us with technical assistance, making the work more viable” (Responsible Area of

Planning SET, 2013). The coverage personal note that the working with the vulnerable population, they worked primarily with NRC. “With coverage, NRC, and also MoE have helped us a lot, especially with the MEFs”. In terms of quality, this is more related to Save the Children. She also comments that everyone has a clear role in the alliance, where everyone knows what to do and what is expected of them (Responsible Area of Coverage SET, 2013).

Equality in decision-making, Communication, project outcomes and transparency

Regarding communication and transparency, the quality official states that the communication is restricted to what is necessary for the project. He reports a good exchange of communication. On a general level, when new partners arrive [such as other NGOs], “we inform them of what projects we have already running, to avoid that things are being done twice” (Responsible Area of Quality SET, 2013).

Sustainability, Challenges, and Local Empowerment

During the interview it was highlighted several times from all the three that the inter-personal relationships are very important for project sustainability. They also uttered that they had good relations with RECOMPAS, which was actively included in a SET committee for education, and they had frequent contact with them when they visited the EIs that were implementing EE. When discussing sustainability, the staff showed that it is aware of the limitations:

The alliance requires certain processes; SET implements, but lacks the technical capacity and resources for accomplishment. Therefore we need to have an alliance with other partners, helping us to continue with our work. We have a good relationship with NRC. They come to help and support, making part of the process. But in a given moment, when having left installed training, they will leave, and one needs to find new allies or new tools, or bother the MoE for increased support for this territorial entity [Tumaco]. NRC has helped us a lot, also in contact with MoE and the capital. There they do not know what is going on here. We are always working in the alliance, as a team (Responsible Area of Coverage SET, 2013).

The above mentioned also shows that they conceive that MoE has challenges reaching the regions with the necessary education resources. On general terms, the SET is positive towards the co-operation with development aid actors. Many organisations come to help, with training and other support. The problem is that they tend to not considerate our secretariat, leading to their project not receiving the necessary legitimacy (Responsible Area of Coverage SET, 2013). About the alliance, it is commented that

[it] is sustainable as long as the administration supports the projects of the previous administration, making it a part of the development plan. As well that the partner that comes, adapts to, and shows willingness for adaptation. It also depends of the priorities of the NGO staff. The inter-personal relationships are more important than negotiations (Responsible Area of Coverage SET, 2013).

Even though they perceive challenges, they are optimistic about the future: “Things are still missing, we have to be patient. Maybe it gets better in the next two years in terms of education” (Responsible Area of Planning SET, 2013).

5.5.3 Data from the Education Institutions

Education Institution I Tumaco

The interviewed principal from this school is also an EE teacher, and is part of RECOMPAS. He has been active in the design and implementation of the EHS model in rural schools in the municipality of Tumaco. Currently the EHS is ending, but one looks to continue it. People show great interest in the model. “We have to start again, knocking on doors on municipal level, maybe also on departmental level and MoE if it is possible, to amplify the coverage.”

The alliance was founded with NRC and a consultant from Unicauca. After a successful pilot of the model in two communities, it was decided with NRC and SET that we all assumed the model and implemented it in other areas. It has been NRC who has paid for the project, also including school uniforms⁴, transport and other expenses. The state has never given us resources for the FEM, but MoE gives the legal touch to the project, formalising it, in the sense of that the pupils qualify for higher education when having completed the EHS. Unicauca supported with technical assistance. Communication has been good, the roles clear. “Sometimes there are problems with delays, but one always experiences unforeseen issues.” We the partners share mutual goals, even though we are different, we share the goal of education.”

In terms of local empowerment, the principal comments that the project has given the involved pupils self-esteem and social and individual achievement. The project achieved that the pupils changed their mental structure. UNAD, Unicauca and NRC have supported us with training, which has strengthened our organisation and the FEM. In terms of sustainability, we

⁴ It was commented that the uniforms were important, not only is it normal with school uniforms in the country, but they also served to identify the people, something that was important considering that the pupils were living in the middle of areas with high levels of security problems. The principal comments that the uniform gives legitimacy and freedom of movement.

need more EHS teachers, since we only have eight. We need the help of NRC for training more teachers (Principal EI I Tumaco, 2013). The principal does barely mention SC.

Education Institution II Tumaco

The principal from an urban EI in Tumaco is positive towards alliances with international development actors. He mentions that they work both with SC and Plan International. He says that although the EIs have autonomy, they need the approval of MoE and SET for project implementation. Therefore one meets with SET to authorise the work one is planning. In the schools the NGOs are welcomed, both by pupils and teachers. With Save they count eight months of co-operation working with education quality in the school. The principal is aware of the roles of NRC and SC. He also reports that they feel involved in decision-making. “We are fundamental in this. If we don’t want, we do not connect with the NGO. The NGOs are good, Save [the Children] is good. Everyone with good perspectives is well received” (Principal EI II Tumaco, 2013). He further comments that communication and information exchange works well. All the information has been well dispersed. They [SC] send us all necessary information”. During the interview, it is noticed that the principal perceives Save as the donor, and not CIDA, which is not mentioned during the session.

5.5.4 Data from the National University Open and at Distance

The following information was conducted from the UNAD director in Tumaco. He was active with the project from 2011 until the agreement ended in 2012.

UNAD was in charge of graduating students in ethno education, examining them as EE teachers. There were two graduations, one in 2011 and one in 2012. It was the Norwegian council, Save the Children, RECOMPAS and UNAD who designed the project. The director comments that,

at first, everything was co-ordinated through RECOMPAS. The resources were transferred from the council [NRC] to UNAD, and UNAD with RECOMPAS. Logistics and papers were effectuated by UNAD, until the convenience ended. Unfortunately, there were some misunderstandings at the end, the relation between NRC and UNAD did not end well, due to a person that I think is no longer present. Therefore, the project stopped. Obviously, our doors are not closed. We are open for new alliances, if the chance is given. We received resources from NRC for the project (Director UNAD, 2013).

This issue of challenges in the personal relationship with NRC is also confirmed from NRC as we saw earlier. The director is also clear on that all resources transferred by NRC were

monitored, and RECOMPAS handed in reports. In terms of co-ordination, it was NRC who put the resources, while UNAD responded for the academic training. The role of NRC was to supervise overseeing that things went in accordance to the plan.

The director states that he misses access to UNAD documentation, but he thinks that there maybe was some empowerment transferred to UNAD in the beginning of the project.

When talking about challenges, the director mentions:

At first everything went fine. Than later there appeared a jealousy between the institutions. I think that this finally broke up the relations between NRC and UNAD. This was because of two persons who were unable to obtain a dialogue, over there in Bogota. Apart from that, in terms of co-operation, there were no problems. I think that one can continue with this type of alliances, especially in this special region, forgotten by the state, minimal state presence. This project helps the most vulnerable people in the area.

This shows that it seems that problems with personal communication ended the partnership with NRC.

5.5.5 Data from the University of Nariño

The following information is based on an interview with the academic consultant from Udenar that worked with the HFP model in Pasto and Tumaco.

He states that it was Udenar which was managing the HFP and the Learning Circle models, while a national NGO⁵ operated them. The HFP was developed by the NGO which solicited support from the faculty at Udenar. “Here, amongst the vulnerable population, there is a lot of mistrust towards all organisations other than the Catholic Church and Udenar. Therefore the NGO contacted us, to give the project credibility”. The principal allies were ESs, NRC, and Udenar. There were little relations with SC. This relation was more of an administrative type, for audit reasons. All communication was with NRC. We never met with CIDA, the donor. We did not work with CBOs in the project.

With NRC and the NGO the roles were very clear and concrete. “We received resources from the NRC, and nothing from the state. Udenar also contributed with human resources, since we were lent to the project, with our salary from Udenar” [...]. “We had a fluent dialogue with

⁵ The name of the NGOs working with NRC and Udenar are not mentioned since they are not part of the study, and also in terms of maintaining project privacy.

NRC. The alliance was very transparent. With the Ess and Ies there was a permanent dialogue, but it was not fluent. It was more due to necessity”.

A problem is that NGO intervention does not leave empowerment [speaking in general about the NGOs], considering the high amounts of resources invested with their projects, but they do not leave installed capacity. The principal challenge of the HFP was that students dropped out of school. They should also be followed up more after having graduated with work-related activities. Also, he states that

there should be more follow-up in terms of the results after that the project has ended in the community where the projects have taken place. The state should also take more responsibility for the problems with the education in the region. In an alliance the state should be central (Academic consultant Udenar, 2013).

Another positive outcome of the project is that the HFP gave new motivation for many women in Tumaco, where they did not even know a computer. There is a lot of solidarity amongst the students, which were helping each other, with preparing food during sessions, babysitting etc. In general terms Udenar is interested in more alliances with the international co-operation.

The consultant also uttered concerns over the lack of following-up of finalised NGO projects in the communities. The state also should take more responsibility for the problems with the education in the region. In an alliance the state should be central (Academic consultant Udenar, 2013).

5.5.6 Data from the University of Cauca

The personal from Unicauca have been employed by the NRC to develop the curricula for EE in Nariño and Cauca. The university also educates EE teachers. They serve as pedagogical consultants. It is commented that the project has empowered many women, who earlier were more submissive due to gender issues. “They have learned new things, how to handle their children and husbands. This is one of the positive outcomes of the EHS, this empowerment and strengthening” (Consultant and EE teacher Unicauca, 2013).

The consultant continues with stating:

I understand that EHS, I hoped that SET will continue the process, considering that they were left with installed empowerment and training, that it continues. Students want to finish the ESH, but the SET has not compromised itself in this work, while the Norwegian council IS ready. [...] The education secretary is responsible for the education. The

problem is that people get used to that the Norwegian council finances. In terms of MoE, we have a process of institutionalisation of the model [...]. I think that, if the community demand it, in relation with SET, the project can be sustainable. Also NRC is interested in that the project continues (Consultant and EE teacher Unicauca, 2013).

The main consultants from Unicauca working with the project in 2013 are concerned over the MoE. They claim that the Ministry does not focus on education in the rural zones. Instead it is only dealing with education statistics in form of national school tests in the major cities of Medellin and Bogota. With NRC the co-ordination is good, everyone has clear roles (EE consultants Unicauca, 2013).

Further on, the consultants depict the alliance consisting primarily of NRC, RECOMPAS and Unicauca. Compared to other agencies, NRC is highly respecting us and the independency of organisations such as RECOMPAS. Still, for them, the university is not directly involved, since NRC only contracts them as consultants, a type of contractor, and not ally. The university is only working with higher education; therefore it has no resources for the EE project. Still, in the field the consultants are always identified as Unicauca, giving the project legitimacy.

For the consultants it is important that the project is “owned” by RECOMPAS, the communities themselves, and not the University or NGOs. There are challenges in the alliance since three persons in RECOMPAS have received death threats, and the members are victims of extortion and kidnappings, also today. One of them is already displaced [referring to the advisor on EE from RECOMPAS]. If one considers these problems, it is impressing that the communities give priority to education and not other issues. Still, they have to watch their back all the time. Another problem is that education is not being given priority in international co-operation and CSOs, since it is responsibility of the state (EE consultants Unicauca, 2013).

For the consultants, the primary challenge has been to convince the teachers to shift their focus to EE and to considerate the inclusion of out-of-school children. Also the principals of the corresponding EIs were reluctant to the project.

They are very traditional, only thinking of other issues such as education indicators such as ICFES and SABER. The teachers are the main enemies of the EHS. Later, the graduated EHS pupils scored the highest on the national tests. The EHS model is very good, and now it needs to be approved by the MoE (EE consultants Unicauca, 2013).

The above shows that the project has obtained good results, giving it legitimacy for continuation.

6 ANALYSIS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

6.1 Analysis of the Partnership and Partners

The results of the study will now be presented, with the aim to analyse and draw conclusions on the involved partners and their role in the relation. Tables which indicate how each entity has scored on the indicators are presented for the main partners. The tables categorise the indicators according to their presentation in the previous chapter, where they were grouped together as A, B, C, and D in the tables. The results have emerged from the analysis done by the researcher based on the data collected from interviews, observation and available documentation. Moreover, the tables attempt to give a proposition of level of partnership in accordance with the previous theory of NGO partnerships elaborated by Fowler.

6.1.1 The Role of CIDA

Based on the collected data from the field, the role of CIDA is primarily to fund and monitor the project. As donor, it regulates how the partners are to work together. As part of the agreement, NRC and SC have to share offices and manage the projects together. CIDA makes field visits to Tumaco and has contact with several of the partners on local level such as EIs, the schools and local administration. They seem to have a good relation with NRC and SC and communication between them is good, even though more so in Bogota than in Tumaco. Both NGOs have their main offices in Bogota, where also the Canadian embassy is situated. For several of the partners, such as the IEs and RECOMPAS, the role of CIDA in the partnership is not vital, since NRC and SC are identified as the donors.

6.1.2 The Role of NRC

NRC inhabits many roles in the partnership. It is identified as the donor, technical assistant and supervisor by RECOMPAS and as an implementing partner by the donor. Moreover it is identified as an advocacy organisation. For several of the partners, NRC and not Save the Children is seen as the main ally. However, the data show that NRC and SC are becoming more visible as a team through their combined effort for VLE. This can be ascribed to their strategy where each NGO present the project by highlighting that they are several entities working together. This includes MoE and SET, since the NGOs actively mention them in

reports and project presentations, interpreted as a strategy to create “good-will” on behalf of the education authorities. The NRC faces challenges with the alliance. Although there are fewer implementing partners involved in VLE than in PAC, the alliance is costly. A lot of resources are used to empower the implementing partners, which mostly consists of training the management of human and financial resources. In both projects, the role of NRC is to effectuate its expertise on working with the marginalised population. Its primordial responsible is to monitor children and youth not attending school, to be able to incorporate them into normal classes in the IEs or otherwise in FEMs.

Cat.	Indicators	Results
A	<p><i>Understanding of partnership</i> – How does each partner understand the established partnership?</p> <p>Relation based on Fowler</p> <p><i>Co-ordination</i>, - Agreement on who is responsible for what</p>	<p>Alliance with</p> <p>1. Implementing partners (receiving resources): RECOMPAS, NGOs, Udenar, Unicauca, UNAD.</p> <p>2. Strategic allies (not receiving financial resources: MoE, SET, Els.</p> <p>Fowler: Strong coalition (level 4) with SC and RECOMPAS. An alliance for necessity due to donor and implementing factors.</p> <p>The partners have clear roles in the partnership, especially in the second project.</p>
B	<p><i>Equality in decision making</i> – Feedback on degree of equity.</p> <p><i>Communication</i> – how (often) is this between the partners?</p> <p><i>Expectations</i> – Agreement on common project outcomes?</p> <p><i>Transparency</i> – and information exchange</p>	<p>High levels of equality in decision-making, although NRC perceives to supervise RECOMPAS, taking the lead in the alliance.</p> <p>High levels of communication with SC and RECOMPAS. Medium with public entities.</p> <p>Common outcome: support vulnerable population with education. In PAC, there were medium levels of expectations for common outcomes between NRC and the local NGOs.</p> <p>High. NRC and SC play with open cards. NRC is clear of what it wants.</p>
C	<p><i>Sustainability</i> – Future co-operation and project sustainability.</p> <p><i>Challenges</i> – main challenges in the partnership?</p> <p><i>Local empowerment</i> – is partnership leading to local empowerment?</p>	<p>Although the alliance is good, there is limited sustainability considering that the projects have limited time-frames.</p> <p>Continuation in terms of the Colombian state taking responsibility for the education efforts. High costs with project e.g. with transport and logistics. Work with dispersed settlements.</p> <p>Medium/high levels of local empowerment for RECOMPAS, SET, Els, MoE, universities.</p>
	<i>New findings?</i>	Alliance necessary for project implementation, legitimacy, and safety matters.

Table III: Indicators for the Norwegian Refugee Council

6.1.3 The Role of SC

It is apparent that the northern partners NRC and SC include MoE and SET when they present the project and/or other results or similar, frequently highlighting the work of the government despite the fact that the government is not always essential for the project development. This can be seen as a strategy to continue the co-operation and “good will” on behalf of the education authorities, indicating *how* important it is for the two NGOs to demonstrate that they are working as a team. From observation and interviews, it is clear that the project still struggles with legitimacy if the goal is to work together. For instance, NRC is the main partner for RECOMPAS in the case of EHS. Some of the EIs perceive NRC as the partner, why others only relate to SC.

The main role of SC is to serve as a technical and financial partner, offering to improve education within the EIs in the form of structural improvement. It does so by actively working with all levels of the schools, ranging from the principal and teachers to the inclusion of pupils and their parents.

Cat.	Indicators	Results
A	<p><i>Understanding of partnership</i> – How does each partner understand the established partnership?</p> <p>Relation based on Fowler</p> <p><i>Co-ordination</i>, - Agreement on who is responsible for what</p>	<p>Alliance with both implementing partners and public operators (Ess, MoE etc.). NRC is principal ally. Admits naming implementing partners allies. Working with EIs, good contact with MoE and SET is crucial.</p> <p>Fowler: coalition (level 4) in VLE.</p> <p>Clear roles. NRC works with MEF and access, while NRC works with quality</p>
B	<p><i>Equality in decision making</i> – Feedback on degree of equity.</p> <p><i>Communication</i> – how (often) is this between the partners?</p> <p><i>Expectations</i> – Agreement on common project outcomes?</p> <p><i>Transparency</i> – and information exchange</p>	<p>Medium to high levels of equality in project management.</p> <p>Good communication with NRC and CSOs. Lesser communication with the education authorities.</p> <p>Medium to high levels of common goals for the projects</p> <p>High levels of transparency.</p>

C	<p><i>Sustainability</i> – Future co-operation and project sustainability.</p> <p><i>Challenges</i> – main challenges in the partnership?</p> <p><i>Local empowerment</i> – is partnership leading to local empowerment?</p>	<p>The sustainability of the alliance depends on clear roles and good results.</p> <p>Problems with frequent staff changes in the NGOs, also in SET. Difficult to work as a team/project, since SC and NRC work a lot apart in the “field”.</p> <p>Medium degree of local empowerment. More with the EIs and the corresponding teachers & pupils, less with SET and MoE.</p>
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Table IV: Indicators for Save the Children

6.1.4 The Role of RECOMPAS

The southern corporation RECOMPAS shows high levels of autonomy, and it has several priorities whose conditions are not negotiable even though the corporation is very dependent on financial resources. These resources are usually supplied by CIDA through NRC. For RECOMPAS, NRC is the main donor. Still, its technical capacity compared to that of the NNGOs is inferior. Nevertheless, it has achieved to become a noticeable organisation, capable of meeting on ever more equal grounds when facing public and private entities. RECOMPAS is an essential partner for the project implementation because the project is dependent on local knowledge and support, particularly in terms of safe access to high risk areas. Furthermore, the members of RECOMPAS are crucial as consultants for the NGOs in the planning of their projects. As such, the possibilities for supporting the actual education needs in the region are strengthened.

In terms of the FEMs, it is of importance that the curricula are designed by RECOMPAS teachers and not by the NGOs or universities. This further sustains the active inclusion of the southern organisation in project development and implementation, which again supports the balance in the relation. Regarding the partnership, some allies are more important than others. The data show that one can depict several alliances within the main alliance, for instance the alliance between RECOMPAs, NRC and Unicauca.

During the interviews, the RECOMPAS members focused more on the internal work with EE than on the alliance with the other partners. Replying to questions about the relationship with the other partners, RECOMPAS members answered on behalf of themselves. On the other hand, NRC, SCiC and the universities provided more information about the partnership as a whole. This tells us that the partners perceive the project differently. In a certain way, we claim that NRC and SciC seem have a more general perspective on the partnership, while

RECOMPAS sees it from a smaller point of view. This can be justified through the backgrounds and previous experiences of the organisations, considering that the NNGOs in many ways are professional organisations with substantial training and experience from working with development and humanitarian assistance. On the other side, RECOMPAS' perspective is more limited to the areas of their own communities and daily life.

Cat.	Indicators	Results
A	<p><i>Understanding of partnership</i> – How does each partner understand the established partnership?</p> <p>Relation based on Fowler</p> <p><i>Co-ordination</i>, - Agreement on who is responsible for what</p>	<p>Alliance mainly with NRC, which is perceived donor. In lesser degree with univ., SC, SET, MoE. The public entities are necessary for public credibility.</p> <p>Fowler: consortium (level 3)</p> <p>In first project (PAC): medium In second (VLE): high</p>
B	<p><i>Equality in decision making</i> – Feedback on degree of equity.</p> <p><i>Communication</i> – how (often) is this between the partners?</p> <p><i>Expectations</i> – Agreement on common project outcomes?</p> <p><i>Transparency</i> – and information exchange</p>	<p>RECOMPAS has autonomy in EE planning and implementation. Also, balanced relation with NRC. Feels included in decision-making in both projects.</p> <p>Good communication with partners. Internal communication medium/high, but has improved.</p> <p>High levels of sharing common goals – to educate the regional population. Medium levels of common strategy for how to get there. Perceived high levels of transparency with NRC. With public entities, levels are medium.</p>
C	<p><i>Sustainability</i> – Future co-operation and project sustainability.</p> <p><i>Challenges</i> – main challenges in the partnership?</p> <p><i>Local empowerment</i> – is partnership leading to local empowerment?</p>	<p>The FEMs have a future, but implies state financing. NRC will withdraw. RECOMPAS is better equipped to meet with state for agreements.</p> <p>Financial resources for project sustainability. Convincing teachers and schools to install project.</p> <p>A lot local empowerment. RECOMPAS has received substantial training. Also schools, teachers and the students have increased their empowerment.</p>
D	<i>New findings?</i>	In the alliance, there are several smaller alliances between fewer of the partners.

Table V: Indicators for RECOMPAS

6.1.5 The Roles of SET, MoE, EIs and the Universities

All the mentioned entities are necessary in several ways. Firstly, they are important partners for the effectuation of the projects since they depend on the EIs for implementation and

replication of the education models. Instead of offering non-formal education, the projects work within the formal education system. In this case the partners also depend on the formal approval of the local ES and MoE.

Education Secretariat of Tumaco

The SET is responsible for the organisation of the rural and urban EIs on municipal level; therefore they serve as the approving entity for the education projects. Although it has become more active as a partner, its role is still mainly to approve and institutionalise the FEMs, as well as approving the presence of NRC and SC in the EIs. The NGOs and RECOMPAS actively involve SET in the project in order to maintain good relations. Still, not only are the NGOs and RECOMPAS dependent on SET, but the secretariat also depends on them because it has limited resources and admits that without support it is not capable to guarantee educational support to all children and youth in their jurisdiction. When co-operating with the NGOs, SET can accomplish more results. It also lacks the knowledge and training necessary for improving their administration of education. Therefore they are positive towards the co-operation with NRC and SC, as well as with other NGOs such as Plan International. They are aware of the limited time frames of the NGOs; therefore they make the most of the partnerships while they have the possibility. Finally, SET requires more governmental funding from MoE to improve the education system in the region.

Cat.	Indicators	Results
A	<p><i>Understanding of partnership</i> – How does each partner understand the established partnership?</p> <p>Relation based on Fowler</p> <p><i>Co-ordination</i>, - Agreement on who is responsible for what</p>	<p>A necessary partnership for all partners from which SET gains training from working with NRC and in lesser degree SC.</p> <p>Fowler: Alliance (level 2)</p> <p>The partners have clear roles in the alliance; everyone knows what to do, especially in the second project.</p>
B	<p><i>Equality in decision making</i> – Feedback on degree of equity.</p> <p><i>Communication</i> – how (often) is this between the partners?</p> <p><i>Expectations</i> – Agreement on common project outcomes?</p> <p><i>Transparency</i> – and information exchange</p>	<p>SET is not active in decision-making, but more an approving entity, giving the partnership and its project public legitimacy and credibility. The secretariat classifies the communication as good, but restricted to what is necessary for the project.</p> <p>There is certain agreement, although SET expects a lot of financial support, and negotiates this.</p> <p>NRC and RECOMPAS are open with their information exchange.</p>

C	<p><i>Sustainability</i> – Future co-operation and project sustainability.</p> <p><i>Challenges</i> – main challenges in the partnership?</p> <p><i>Local empowerment</i> – is partnership leading to local empowerment?</p>	<p>Optimistic about future of partnership with other organisations, although SET knows that NRC and SC will terminate funding in some years.</p> <p>Challenges with effectuating their work without NGO support, due to restrictions with financial and human resources.</p> <p>SET implements, but has limited resources and capacity. Therefore depends on NRC, SC, and RECOMPAS. In a lesser degree MoE.</p>
D	<i>New findings?</i>	The inter-personal relations are crucial for the alliance.

Table VI: Indicators for the Education Secretariat of Tumaco

The role of MoE

The National Ministry of Education is the national entity responsible for education. According to the collected data, the ministry seems to have two roles in the partnership. The first is similar to the one of SET, where it contributes to public legitimisation of the projects. The MoE must also be included when the projects are formally approved and integrated into the EIs in Tumaco. The second role of the MoE is to be the feasible entity for taking charge for the EE models. This requires a lot of advocacy work on behalf of NRC and RECOMPAS. During field work, there were ongoing meetings between NRC, Unicauca and RECOMPAS members to agree on the possibility of MoE taking financial and institutional responsibility for the ethno education. The idea is to implement the model on a nationwide level. It was reported in 2014 that MoE has agreed on supporting the EE with financial resources, which is good news for the ongoing project (Save the Children Colombia, 2014).

The role of the Education Institutions in Tumaco

The schools are central for the partnership because it is there where much of the project implementation is taking place. In both projects, SC and NRC are actively working with the schools. NRC implements the FEMS and SC works with institutional improvement for better education conditions. The EIs have limited resources, often lack basic infrastructure such as water and hence seem to be positive towards the partnership and the support it brings. The partners provide school uniforms, learning materials, kits and other resources which the EIs are lacking. Moreover, when working with the teachers and pupils, the lunches and refreshments that SC and NRC bring to the schools are popular.

Principals and teachers in the EIs have however been reluctant to implement ethno-education, since this implies a shift from traditional classroom education to new ways of thinking. New groups of pupils, consisting of children, youth and adults that have not finished primary and secondary education must be taught during weekdays and weekends alike. Part of the project is to enrol out-of-school children and youth, something that creates a demand on more space and resources, which also is a challenge for the schools. In some places, such as the urban area of Tumaco, there are three schools sessions per day with three different groups of pupils. The EE also implies a demand for further teachers with the necessary qualifications.

The roles of the three universities

The primary function of the universities in the partnership is to give the projects academic weight that contributes to legitimise the project, as we saw in the case of Unicauca. This work consists primarily of advising RECOMPAS in the development of the EE curricula, also known as the modules. For Unicauca the co-operation is limited to the provision of consultants, which are paid by NRC. This means that the university itself is not directly involved in the partnership. On the other side, Udenar had more institutional presence since it lent out staff to the project, while keeping their salary. UNAD received resources directly from NRC for the education of EE teachers.

The second function of the universities is to train EE teachers who can contribute to work with the FEMs in Tumaco. It is evident in PAC that the universities are mainly relating to NRC, RECOMPAS and the Colombian NGOs. They relate to a lesser degree to the education authorities and SC.

Cat.	Indicators	Results
A	<p><i>Understanding of partnership</i> – How does each partner understand the established partnership?</p> <p>Relation based on Fowler</p> <p><i>Co-ordination</i>, - Agreement on who is responsible for what</p>	<p>Partnership for increasing legitimacy, giving public credibility, apart from serving as technical consultants, for creation of curricula and teacher training.</p> <p>Fowler: alliance (level 2)</p> <p>Agreement with UNAD and NRC terminated due to personal issues. Otherwise good levels of co-ordination. Clear roles: NRC finances, unis delivered academic training and support. State is not financing.</p>
B	<p><i>Equality in decision making</i> – Feedback on degree of equity.</p> <p><i>Communication</i> – how (often) is this between the partners?</p> <p><i>Expectations</i> – Agreement on common project outcomes?</p> <p><i>Transparency</i> – and information exchange</p>	<p>Medium levels of decision-making for the uni. NRC and RECOMPAS are more central in this. The unis do not see the alliance as a whole, more focus on relationship with NRC and RECOMPAS</p> <p>High levels of comm. With NRC, RECOMPAS and Els. Low levels with SC, MoE and SET.</p> <p>Medium/high levels of common project outcomes.</p> <p>High levels of transparency. There is no profit involved.</p>
C	<p><i>Sustainability</i> – Future co-operation and project sustainability.</p> <p><i>Challenges</i> – main challenges in the partnership?</p> <p><i>Local empowerment</i> – is partnership leading to local empowerment?</p>	<p>Alliance with Udenar and UNAD are discontinued. Both are open for new alliances with the NGOs. FEM depend on state financing.</p> <p>There could be more empowerment of the included communities and follow them up more after NGO withdrawal. Project needs more state presence.</p> <p>Medium to high levels of local empowerment, in terms of strengthening RECOMPAS, universities, SET and MoE.</p>
D	<i>New findings?</i>	University staff serves as contracted consultants for NRC. Unis not direct involved since they focus on higher education, and not primary and second

Table VII: Indicators for the partnering universities

6.1.6 The Roles of the Colombian NGOs

We want to underline that the following statements are based on data where the two NGOs were not interviewed. In PAC, two Colombian NGOs served as implementing partners for NRC. According to a previous evaluation done for Norad, the project contained too many implementing partners, which challenges an effective project management (Thomas et al., 2011, p. 42). In co-ordination with the two SNGOs, several FEMs were developed. Our data show that the alliance with the SNGOs ended. In the first case, it ended since the developed FEM was transferred to the government. The partnership with the second SNGO ended when

it was not to hand out the FEM to the government nor to other organisations. This again shows problems of the ownership of the models. NRC reported that the partners had different project outcome objectives; one of the SNGOs was more focused on working for peace than for education. NRC staff reported that it was sometimes difficult to work with national and local NGOs; hence they prefer to hire them as consultants when necessary.

6.1.7 Comments on Networks and Clusters

A previous Norad evaluation on NRC in Colombia for the years 2008-2010 reaffirmed that successful project implementation and political sustainability in the region depends on good co-operation with other entities, particularly in advocating for the FEMs if they were to become sustainable. Co-operation through networks and clusters is crucial in addition to the establishment of alliances with NGOs, international aid organisations, and the education authorities (Thomas et al., 2011, p. 42). NRC and SC are both active in the regional IASC. Further on, the NGOs are allied through the regional roundtable for education and displacement, as well as the regional roundtable for EE and EiE. In these networks, the NGOs work together with UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Ret, IRC and WFP. Several other regional public and private entities are involved, such as education secretariats and CSOs working with displacement. These alliances are crucial for successful implementation and the sustainability of projects, according to donors. Many of these networks are also encountered on national levels. The networks advocate for government attention to issues such as mass displacements and out-of-school children and youth.

6.1.8 Validity and Reliability of the Data

In the opinion of the researcher, the data collected during field work have good levels of reliability since there were several sources from the different partners providing similar information. This shows that a parallel research approach in many ways will lead to the same results. In terms of internal validity, a step-by-step approach using Yin's framework was implemented in the case study design, which creates a clear and focused order for how to treat the data. Concerning the external validity, the data are based on a single-case study and are hence somewhat limited, causing the results to have limited value in terms of generalisability. Yet, the case may contribute to a better understanding of how southern and northern partners

can work together on development projects in an inclusive and democratic way, with public entities as well as other NGOs.

6.1.9 Conclusions on the North-South Partnership

Returning to the research questions, the analysis shows that partnership is crucial for the work of the NNGOs for several reasons. A central factor is that they need close co-operation with the communities of beneficiaries, which helps the NGOs to enter areas affected by the armed conflict. Consulting the community moreover provides local knowledge which is essential for the successful implementation of the education projects. Additionally, the use of local resources contributes to local empowerment which in turn helps to secure the continuity and sustainability of the projects because members of the communities learn about their rights and how they can address these rights. Although the NGOs will leave the area at some point of completion, they will leave a strengthened civil society engaged in different levels of communication and organisation with the education authorities and development organisations.

The data show frequent mentioning of partnership, but the implementation of partnership models or strategies is fluctuate, both in a theoretical and in practical sense. The data tell us that the partners agree on many of the indicators, but there is also discrepancy on some of them. Most of the partners are aware of the possibilities and limitations of the partnership, and they understand that it is of temporary existence due to donor restrictions. Therefore, they attempt to include public education authorities in the project, triggering their sense of responsibility for education provision for the vulnerable population in the region. The data also show that several of the interviewees shift from perceiving the alliance to perceiving the education projects, as in the case of the partner RECOMPAS. Nevertheless, this can be a positive finding, since this fits into the proposition of the project, which is that the partnership has to be seen as one united project instead of several smaller projects between two or three of the involved partners.

Regarding the research questions on roles and co-ordination, the analysis shows that within the partnership, each partner to a certain degree feels responsible for certain specific activities. The project was initiated due to necessities for education, and NRC and SC alike entered the partnership offering each their technical specialisation. They agreed on a common goal on which they could work together. NRC is mainly responsible for elaborating census of out-of-

school children, working in rural areas, teacher training and logistics. SCiC works with education quality in the urban areas of Tumaco as well as logistics. Both NGOs are also committed to advocacy and the dispersion of the projects, where a final goal is that the MoE takes responsibility for the FEMs. RECOMPAS is in charge of the development of curricula and facilitates the access to conflict-areas for the NGOs. RECOMPAS communicates with illegal armed groups, something the NGOs cannot due to policy restrictions.

The attention for inter-personal relations is important for effective partnerships, as seen in the case of working with the local NGOs and in the case of SET. This creates social capital which makes the partnerships more viable. The social capital is challenged by the issue that NRC, SCiC and SET experienced frequent staff replacement during the projects, disrupting continuity and weakening the social capital. In the end, many of the partners do not see the project as a whole. Instead, one can identify several smaller projects or alliances. For instance the EHS project worked by NRC and RECOMPAS can be seen as one alliance, while the project working on education quality between SCiC and EIs is another. Here it is also worth mentioning that the partners have expressed that they have one alliance with each IE, something that justifies these results. It is clear that the NGOs and their partners are effectuating activities that should be administered by the government, which brings us to the problem of sustainability. The NGOs' policy in this case is to assist with local empowerment, in civil and public sector alike with the ultimate goal of withdrawal when the target is fulfilled or when donor priorities are altered.

Summary

In this chapter we have presented the partners and their views regarding the co-operation, using primary sources such as interviews and observations as well as project reports and evaluations. The data tells us that some partners are more significant in the partnership than others. Some of them are only contributing with financial resources, while others serve to give the project legitimacy through the names of different public education entities. Other partners have more complex roles, serving both as donors, technical consultants as well as providing logistics. Lastly, one sees that some relationships have been working better than others, and some partners are not active in the second project.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The concept of development can take different forms, and it continues to be a matter of discussion what development refers to and as to who the beneficiaries of development work are. One of the means broadly considered to stimulate development is education, increasingly being adopted by humanitarian response and development assistance agents alike as a central aspect of their work. The paper has illustrated some examples where donors and NGOs dedicated to aid for development are influenced by global campaigns for education such as EFA and MDGs organised by the UN. The increased numbers of NGOs and other development organisations working in the South have created new strategies for how these actors are to co-operate and co-ordinate their projects, leading to different levels of partnerships. Another central factor for the advocacy of a partnership strategy can partially be explained by a tendency of international development aid agents funding and supporting civil society rather than funding the national government in countries where operations are taking place. This avoids the necessity for working on national, regional and local levels with community organisations and public institutions.

The partnership strategy highlights a necessity for a balanced co-operation, transparency, and local decision-making and empowerment. Several cases indicate that a partnership strategy is a condition for NGOs in the South to receive funding from donor countries in the North. A partnership approach is seen as a necessity for project sustainability and effectiveness. In addition, increased co-operation between NGOs is seen as an important factor to diminish situations where different NGOs are overlapping their projects when working in the same area with the same beneficiaries. Rather, it is believed that it is appropriate to combine resources as a way to improve project outcomes. The studied relationship demonstrates the tendency where different NGOs co-operate for education, each organisation bringing their particular expertise into the partnership.

The current study has analysed how northern NGOs work with education in the South. In addition to explore co-operation between NGOs, the thesis has focused on a partnership that consists of public as well as non-governmental partners, where all partners have different levels of engagement in the alliance, and contribute with each their expertise. The partners all bring their specific knowledge necessary for a well organised project to the table, enhancing legitimacy in the area of implementation as well as in public approval, altogether raising the

possibilities for the project to advance and become institutionalised in the EIs with the approval of the MoE and SET. The terms *partnership*, *partners*, *allies* and *alliances* all entail some degree of co-operation, and it can be asserted that these terms favour a balanced relationship between the partners. Nevertheless, this research contributes to highlight a tendency where organisations working with voluntarism, development assistance or humanitarian aid tend to name its collaborators as “partners”, although it often refers to a financial donor or an implementing consultant for a given project, such partners can thus experience low levels of inclusion in the alliance.

The project outcomes concur with a tendency of international aid, for several reasons, shifting focus from supporting governmental agencies to supporting mainly non-governmental organisations in the countries of operation, as with the case for Colombia. The country receives limited international co-operation and funding for development and for education, since other sectors are given bigger priority. This can partially be explained by the fact that Colombia is categorised as a high middle-income country, with high amounts of financial resources available. Hence donors give priority to other countries and regions with lower GDPs. Besides, the work of NRC in Colombia centres primarily on victims of conflict and not on the general education system. This being said, sources in NRC stated that the IDPs are practically equal to the rural population. Considering that the IDPs already receive some support by the state, the sources claim that the displaced population sometimes is better off than the rural dwellers in terms of access to education.

The case shows that official statistics on education in Colombia look promising, with high rates of literacy and school enrolment. Nevertheless, it has also showed that these numbers tend to change drastically when looking to regional and local levels, where it is found that many pupils enrolled in basic and secondary education are above school-age. Therefore these regions can present a school enrolment exceeding 100%. Still, when looking at the net figures, only counting school-aged children and youth, the figures are far below 100%. Given that the studied region has many isolated communities due to the lack of infrastructure and the need for expensive waterway transportation to move about, many maintain outside the school system. The task of the partnership is to locate the out-of-school population in these areas, so that they are given the possibility to finalise their education, commonly a prerequisite when applying for different work positions.

Further investigation on the subject

There is research and literature available on NGO partnership between the North and the South. However, there is lesser research available on relationships between INGOs and relationships between NGOs and public entities in the country of operation. Further investigation should also focus on how the development sector can increase the involvement of local community organisations. The available literature on NGO partnerships is often elaborated by the NGOs or development organisations themselves, sometimes lacking thorough academic rigour. Taking into consideration the increasing numbers of NGOs and other international development organisations and the growing international funding of the non-public sector, more studies are recommended on the relationship between the organisations and entities working together on local level towards education and support of the IDPs in areas experiencing armed conflict and state abandonment.

Regarding the reliability and validity of the collected data, the study indicates that the several sources stemming from the three main units of the research have led to the same results. When several sources confirm the same information, we can say that the data is more trustworthy. Nevertheless, considering the dimension of the project, the study has limited validity in terms of generalisation. The current study is restricted due to limitations in resources and time. Another restriction is the limited collection of data in areas with low levels of security. On the other side, it is possible to gather data from the NGOs at their headquarters and other centralised offices, but after all, the researcher depends on access to the regions for necessary communication with the local communities. If there were more resources available, future investigation could focus on a study with multiple partnerships to raise the current study's academic value. It would also potentially be fruitful to do a comparative study on various cases which involve more or less the same partners. In our case, both NRC and SC have similar co-operations in other areas of Colombia as well as in other countries. More data could enhance the generalisability of the results, thereby raising the internal validity and reliability of the study.

The future of Colombia and the Pacific region

Since field work was carried out in 2013, there have been events in Colombia that give reason for optimism for a more pacific future for the country. The peace negotiations between FARC-EP and the Colombian government are still taking place in Cuba and slowly evolving, although they have their challenges. As of the first months of 2015, media reports that the ELN is also in dialogue with the government for possible peace negotiations (El Espectador, 2015a). History tells us that these processes usually have failed, but the negotiations with FARC have never come this far before as they have entered their fourth year. Although a peace agreement with FARC not necessarily brings an end to the armed conflict, it will guide the way to reducing the conflict dimension.

The investigation has showed that there are many people in the Colombian Pacific region not attending primary school, although Colombia has acknowledged the MDGs for 2015, including a guarantee of primary education for everyone. It remains to see when or whether Colombia will be able to achieve this. The near future will tell us how the post-2015 MDGs will focus on education, and how this strategy is further implemented in Colombia by the state and NGOs. The Pacific region is intended to receive 400 million USD for further development, jointly funded by the Colombian state and other international donors such as the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. In this approach, referred to as the “Marshall Plan” for the Pacific coast, it is recommended that the resources are not to be administered directly by public servants of the Colombian government (El Espectador, 2015b). Additionally, the UN has declared the years of 2015 to 2024 as the international decade for people with African descent, giving more attention to this vast population counting approximately 150 million in the Americas (UN, 2014a). Hopefully these issues help to place the rights of Afro-Colombians in a national and international context.

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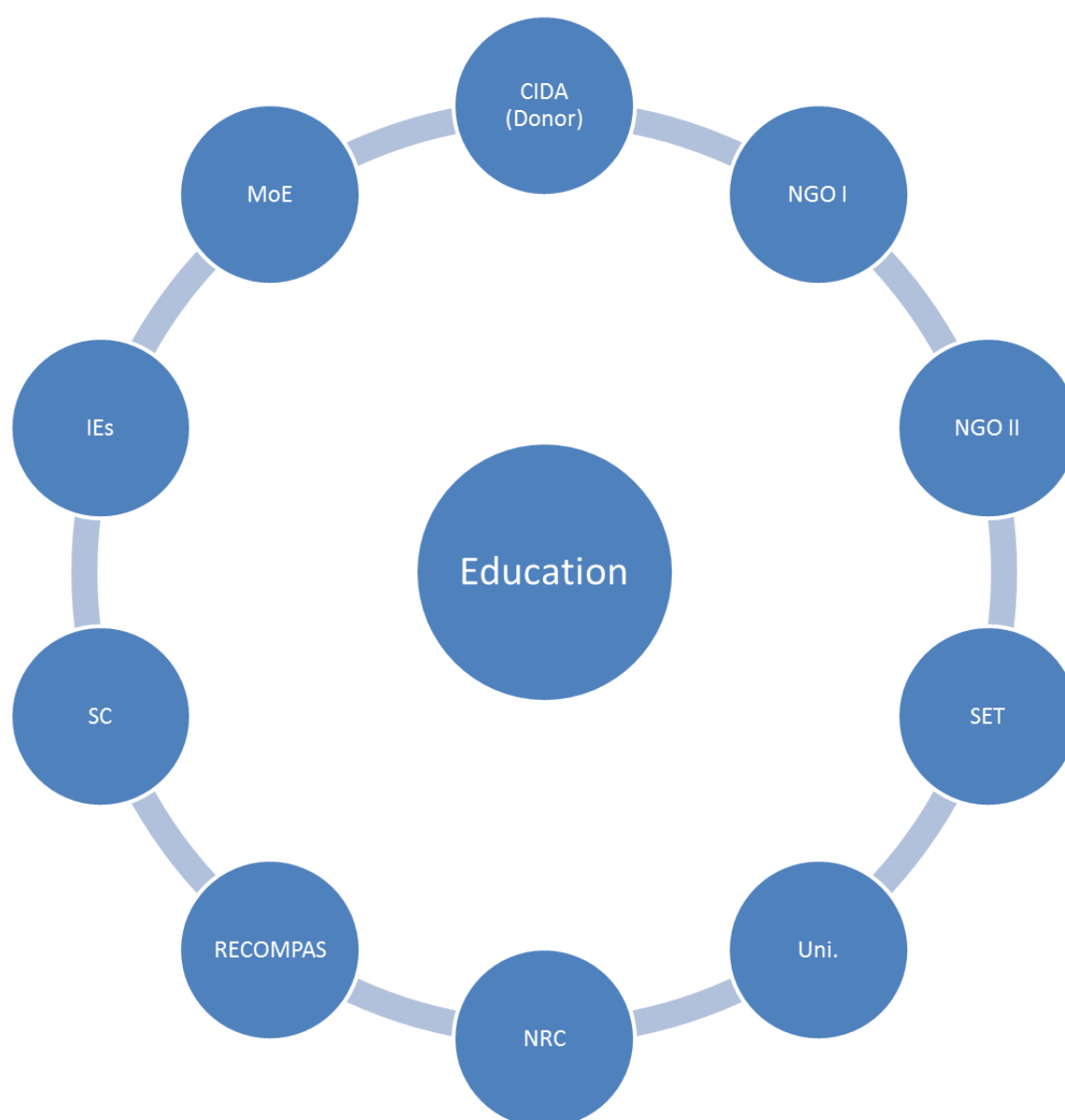
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I

Figure illustrating the partnership



Attachment II

Semi-structured interview guide⁶ for NRC and SC

Introduction: Presentation of the project, the researcher and the structure of the interview, information about the informant's rights and the recording of the conversation.
Basic questions: Simple questions about work, family and free time.
Introductory questions: Discussing the NGO, listening to the informant's experiences about their time working for with the NGO and the position the person has in the organisation.
Transitional questions: Logical connections between the introductory questions and the key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• About the role of the NGO within humanitarian assistance and education• About education co-operation
Key questions (elaboration): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are your thoughts on partnership?• How important is the idea of partnership for the person?• About the relationship between the donor and the NGO.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Conduct – financing - priorities• Internal communication in the NGO• Contact with the other partners – frequency – concrete examples -<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Information exchange and communication between partners - transparency○ Co-ordination –who does what, and who pays for what?• What are the challenges in co-operating with the other units: other NGOs, SET, RECOMPAS, IEs, MoE.• Expectancies – agendas –• Should there be less, equal, or more partnership?
Finalisation: Rounding off, ask the last questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainability in terms of future co-operation• Then, clear up possible ambiguities, questions, comments• Suggestions from informant. Is there anything else which is important to mention?

⁶ Translated from Norwegian

Attachment III

Semi-structured interview guide⁷ for RECOMPAS, universities, principals and teachers

Introduction: Presentation of the project, the researcher and structure of the interview; information on the rights of the informant, recording of the conversation.
Basic questions: Simple questions about their work, family and free time.
Introductory questions: Talk about experiences with the person's position and possibly their profession.
Transitional questions: Logical connection between the introductory questions and the key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• About RECOMPAS/FEMs/ EHS• Co-operation for education for development
Key questions (elaboration): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe how the partnerships works• Thoughts on the partnership – information and opinions about experiences – important?• Challenges with the partnership• Internal communication in the organisation• Communication with other units – concrete examples: SET, NRC, MEN, RECOMPAS, EIs, universities etc.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Information exchange – frequency• Transparency• Expectations and agendas• Co-ordination – who does what? Overlapping?• Sustainability in terms of future co-operation• Financing
Finalisation: Rounding off, ask the last questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should it be less, equal or more partnership?• Then, clear up possible ambiguities, questions, comments• Suggestions from informants. Is there anything else which is important to mention?

⁷ Translated from Norwegian

Attachment IV

Semi-structured interview guide⁸ for the Education Secretariat of Tumaco (SET)

Introduction: Presentation of the project, the researcher and structure of the interview; information on the rights of the informant, recording of the conversation.
Basic questions: Simple questions about their work, family and free time.
Introductory questions: Talk about SET, its organisation, listening to the informant's own experiences, about their time in the secretariat. The position the person has in the organisation.
Transitional questions: Logical connection between the introductory questions and the key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• About the role of SET within education• About co-operation within education for development with other units such as organisations, NGOs and CSOs, RECOMPAS.
Key questions (elaboration): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you think of with partnership?• How important is the idea of partnership for the person(s)?• Financing and priorities in the co-operation.• What are the challenges in the co-operation with NRC, SC and RECOMPAS?• Internal communication in SET• Contact with local partners – frequency – concrete examples – information exchange and communication• Expectations and agendas• Co-ordination – who does what?• Transparency• Financing – who pays for what?• Less, equal, or more partnership?
Finalisation: Rounding off, ask the last questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainability in terms of future co-operation• Then, clear up possible ambiguities, questions, comments• Suggestions from informants. Is there anything else which is important to mention?

⁸ Translated from Norwegian

Attachment V

Letter of consent (in Spanish)

Carta de confirmación de participación voluntaria

Con esta carta se confirma la voluntad de participar voluntariamente en el proyecto de investigación **“La contribución de las ONG a la educación básica y media en Colombia”**, dirigido por el estudiante de maestría, Tobias Wilbers, de la Universidad de Oslo, **Noruega**. El trabajo será presentado para obtener el título de maestría en estudios latinoamericanos.

En cualquier momento tengo la posibilidad de abandonar el proyecto y pedir que mis datos no sean usados. Toda comunicación con el investigador es voluntaria. Los datos recogidos serán tratados bajo 100% discreción, y los nombres de los participantes no aparecerán en el trabajo final. Si habrá interés, se puede comunicarse con el investigador para tener acceso a la tesis cuando esta esté finalizada.

Para más información, por favor comunicarse con el investigador:

Tobias Wilbers

Celular colombiano: (+57) **3043433416**

Celular noruego: (+47) **97623970**

Correo e.: tobiaswi@gmail.com / tiwilber@student.ilos.uio.no

Con esta carta confirmo mi asistencia voluntaria.

Fecha: _____

Nombre del participante: _____

Evnt. entidad: _____

Firma del participante: _____

Attachment VI

List over interviewees and conversations partners, not including observation or participation

NMFA

Written interview

Diplomatic staff, Bogota

NRC

Recorded interviews

National Education manager, location: Bogota

Former national education manager, location: Bogota

Official Education Nariño, location: Tumaco

Written interviews

Education advisor international, location: Oslo

Official national education, location: Bogota

Pedagogical advisor Nariño, location: Tumaco

Team leader Emergency Programme Nariño, location: Tumaco

Official Infrastructure South-west Colombia, location: Tumaco

SC

Recorded interviews

National Education officer, location: Popayan

Coordinator for Cauca and Nariño, location: Popayan

Education official north of Nariño – Pacific coast, location: Tumaco

Written interviews

Project coordinator, protection, Tumaco

Education Official Tumaco and region

EI

Recorded Interviews

Rector IE I Tumaco

Rector IE II Tumaco

RECOMPAS

Recorded Interviews

President of directive council

Education coordinator

Advisor

Other person RECOMPAS

Advisor ethno-education, location: displaced

Ethno-education teacher #1

Ethno-education teacher #2

Written interviews

Coordinator RECOMPAS

SETRecorded interview

In charge of coverage

In charge of planning

In charge of quality

UnicaucaRecorded interviews

Advisor ethno-education, location: Popayan

Advisor ethno-education, location: Popayan

Advisor ethno-education and current teacher in Tumaco, location: Tumaco

UdenarRecorded interview

Project coordinator, location: Pasto

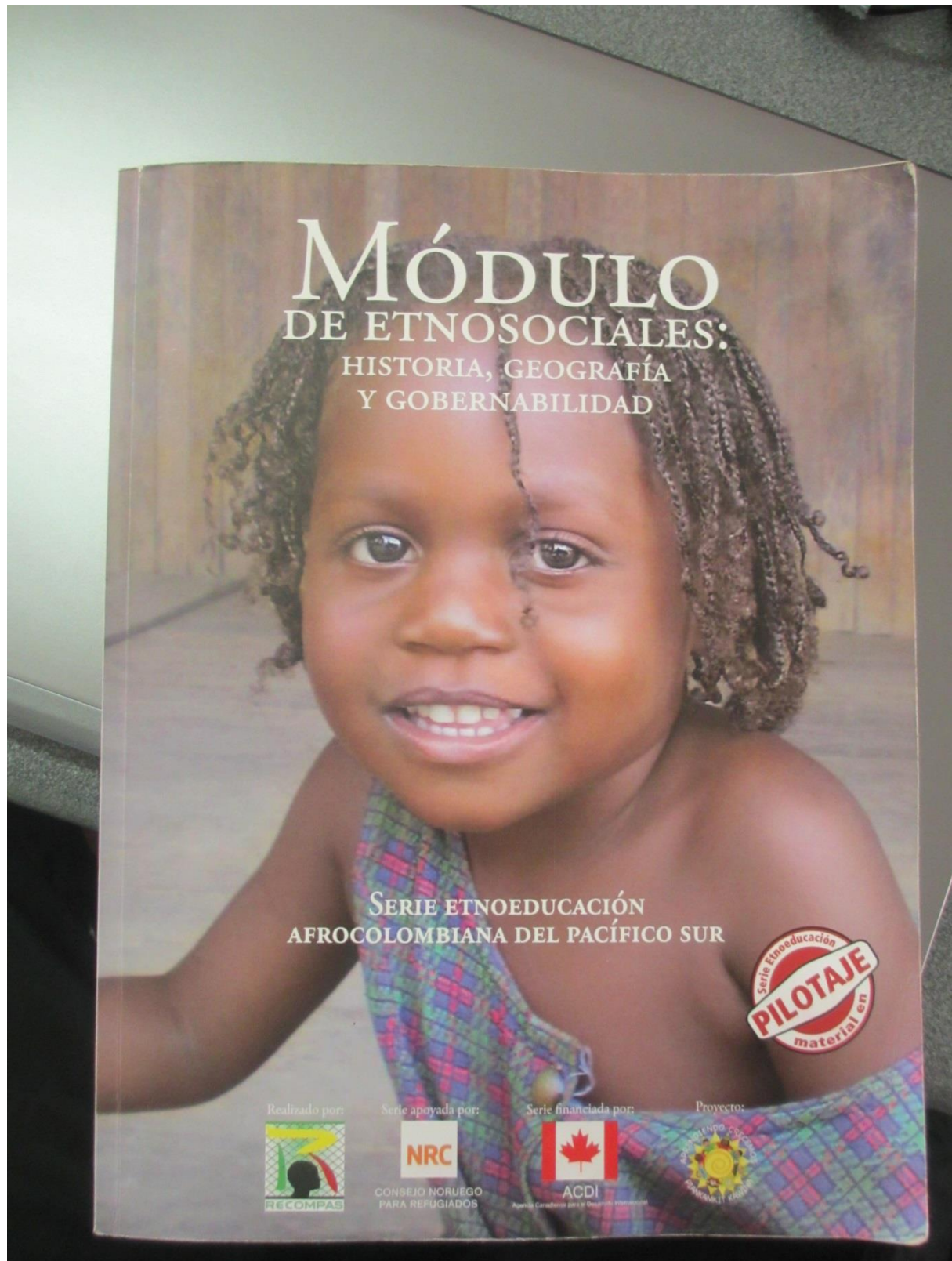
UNADRecorded interview

Director, UNAD Tumaco, location: Tumaco

In total: **32** interviewees/conversation participants/informal conversations participants. Of them, **22** persons were recorded in a total of **13** interviews, where **five** of the interviews were with two persons or more. The communication sessions varied from a few minutes to more than an hour.

Attachment VII

Front cover of curricula developed for the Afro-Colombian community of the Pacific Colombian coast



Attachment VIII

Map of Colombia

Source: CIA



Base 803338A1 (R00820) 1-08